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GREEK POETS
IN ENGLISH VERSE

BY

Various Translators

EDITED, WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES, BY

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WITHDRAWN



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PREFACE.

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THE editor has attempted in this work to do for Greek poetry, through the medium of translations, what has been so often done for English poetry, that is, to give to the reader, within the compass of a single volume, some idea of its wealth, and at the same time to stimulate and guide him to further and more thorough reading. The study of the Greek language would seem to be coming more and more to be the study of the few. But a knowledge of Greek history, Greek art, Greek literature, thought, and feeling, is the concern of everybody. Fortunately, these things are not the monopoly of Greek scholars. The English language now contains much excellent translation from the Greek, both prose and poetry, scattered, however, through a multitude of volumes. With the additional aid of the histories of Greek literature, the many critical essays upon Greek subjects, together with such works as the series of "Ancient Classics for English Readers," it has become quite possible to pursue a Greek course in English. Indeed, there would seem to be no rea-

son why our higher schools and colleges should not give, in the English language, courses in the study of Greek and Latin literatures to their non-classical students. Mr. Richard G. Moulton, of England, who has had large experience in this matter of teaching ancient literature in translation, has shown in America, as in England, how attractive these themes may be made to large audiences of persons not supposed to be acquainted with the works in the original. The present work may be considered as a contribution in this direction. Its contents must speak in its behalf and furnish the reason for its being. It is hoped that to those little acquainted with the subject the book will at least reveal somewhat of the astonishing wealth of Greek poetry in spite of all its loss, — a poetry as rich

“As is the ooze and bottom of the sea

With sunken wreck and sunless treasures.”

This very richness of material has made the task of selection one of no little difficulty. It is hoped that the passages given will be found to be fairly representative of the great ages and phases of Greek poetry. Still the editor regrets the absence of much which he would have been glad to introduce were greater space at his command. He fears, too, that as no book of selections can meet exactly the tastes and wishes of all, some one of his readers may miss the very thing that he hopes to find.

In the case of Homer the choice of translators has been particularly embarrassing. The vexed question of Homeric translation cannot be discussed in this place, but it is safe to say that no version has yet met all demands. Nor shall we ever have a finality in this matter, though Homer will not cease to be translated while the world shall stand; for the lovers of his poetry must still puzzle over the haunting problem. Under the circumstances it has seemed best to the editor not to confine himself to the recognition of any single translator as supreme in merit. For the *Iliad* two passages have been given from Chapman on account of his position in literature as an Elizabethan classic. But, if the truth must be told, his is the last translation in the world to be recommended to the general reader. The reason is apparent. Chapman is hard reading. Every page has vigorous phrasing and passages of a sweet poetic charm, but at the same time, we can read scarcely a dozen lines consecutively without being brought up suddenly by some obscurity of the sense through his quaintness, indirectness, or looseness of construction. It is too much to ask of readers of translation that they should stop every few minutes to puzzle over the meaning of what they are reading. Pope, however inadequate from the point of view of the scholar, is in style vigorous and brilliant, and has the important merit demanded

in a translation — that of being readable. With this feeling the selections from the *Iliad* have been made chiefly from him, while passages have also been given from the blank verse translations of Cowper and Bryant.

For the *Odyssey* the editor has drawn largely from Worsley's beautiful version in Spenserian stanzas. Some passages have also been given in the spirited ballad measures of Maginn — his efforts in this direction being an interesting experiment and cleverly executed, but sufficiently convincing that the ballad manner is not the manner of Homer. As for that dream of scholars and poets alike, — a successful rendering of Homer into English in the original dactylic hexameters, — it seems little likely of realization; though here and there great success has been attained with single passages, as in Dr. Hawtrey's "*Helen on the Walls of Troy*," and in Mr. E. C. Stedman's "*Death of Agamemnon*," both given in this volume.

The plan of the work excluded prose versions, but it is nevertheless the feeling of the editor that it is through these that the non-classical reader must gain his nearest approach to Homer. The beautiful versions of the *Odyssey* by Messrs. Butcher and Lang in England and Professor G. H. Palmer in America are instances of marvelous success in close prose translation.

It remains for the editor — while recognizing his obligation to the great translators of the past — to acknowledge particularly his indebtedness to the many English scholars of the “living present” whose names appear in these pages. To the American translators, Mrs. Lilla Cabot Perry, Professor William C. Lawton, and Mr. Edmund C. Stedman, the thanks of the editor are also due for permission to use translations from their published works.

W. H. A.

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INTRODUCTION.

OUR debt to the Greeks in art, in literature, in philosophy, has been universally recognized. Great as is our obligation in the realm of art, it is as great in that of literature. Some notion of what we owe to Greek poetry may be formed if we can imagine ourselves suddenly deprived of it, were such an appalling calamity possible ; still more, if we can imagine that ancient song never to have been sung, and its inspiration and stimulus never to have wrought their mighty magic in the new literature of Europe that arose with the Renaissance. We might indeed curiously inquire what, in that event, would be our poetical treasure to-day, but the speculation would be altogether idle. We may accept the fact of obligation with gratitude and wonder. In the presence of the great masters of Greek poetry all eulogy is vain. There is simply no satisfying estimate to be made of their surpassing merit. Nor is there any final analysis that can lay bare the germ or process from which sprang such flower-like perfection. There is no art to tell us how the work may again be done. The wrath of Achilles, the wanderings of Ulysses, the woes of the house of Thebes, and the tragedy of the house of Mycenæ still hold us under the spell of their tremendous power, but they can

never be told again. The Greeks created; they imitated none nor can they be imitated, for the secret of their art lies "deeper than ever plummet sounded."

The great lines of poetical development were in the Epic, the Lyric, and the Drama. When we come to consider the earliest poetry of the Greeks, the Epic, we are confronted at once by the "Homeric Question," that spectre which it would seem will never down. But the question of the authorship of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* need not concern us here. Interesting as it is in some ways, and leading incidentally to some profitable results, it is, nevertheless, as far as its solution is concerned, like the wandering wood of *Errour* in which *Una* and the Knight went so woefully astray, or like those speculations of Milton's fallen angels who "found no end in wandering mazes lost." But our failure to solve the mystery of their origin need not disturb our enjoyment of the poems. Whoever the author, whatever the process of their construction, here are the two great Epics, consistent, harmonious wholes — different in kind, but equal in charm.

The *Iliad* is not, as might seem from its name, the story of *Ilium*; that is, it does not tell the entire story of the Trojan War. It narrates but an episode, occurring in the tenth year of the long struggle, and at the close of the poem *Troy* is still untaken. Still the poet has managed to give us scenes which might be called representative — such as might have occurred at any time during the war, and he has made us as well acquainted with its great

heroes, Achilles, Ulysses, Hector, and the rest, as if we had followed them during the long period supposed to have passed before the opening of the poem. The poet states as his theme the wrath of Achilles and its disastrous results. What is his first picture? We see an aged priest of Apollo drawing near the camp of the Greeks. In his hand he carries a gilded staff bearing the soft woolly chaplet that marks his holy office. He comes from Chrysa, the little neighboring town which the Greeks have sacked, and seeks to ransom his daughter, who has become the prize of Agamemnon. He is rudely repulsed, and as he returns along the shore of the loud resounding sea he raises a prayer for vengeance to the god whom he serves. Then Apollo sends his darts of pestilence among the Greeks. Agamemnon is humbled and returns the girl, but to recompense himself takes away Briseïs from Achilles. That haughty warrior yields to his superior lord, but announces his purpose to enter the field no more until his wrongs are atoned for. And now the Greeks may see how they will fare in battle without their foremost champion. The poet goes on to tell how they fought for two long days; how at the end of the second day, trembling on the verge of ruin, they send a night embassy to Achilles, imploring his return; how he refuses, and they enter upon a third day of fighting; how the Trojans push on in victory to the very beach, and are already calling for torches to fire the ships of the Greeks; how Achilles then, to save the fleet from utter destruction, gives his armor to his friend Patroclus to

wear in his stead ; how the Trojans flee in terror, supposing that Achilles has really returned to the battle ; how Patroclus is finally slain by Hector, and how the anguish of Achilles for his friend and his wild hunger for revenge accomplish what nothing else could do, and bring him again to the battle ; how he slays Hector and is appeased once more.

Such is the bare outline of the poem. But this is not Homer, any more than canvas, brush, or paint is the picture. This is, however, the story which the poet has wrought into fadeless beauty, the story upon which he has lavished a world of wealth in character, situation, incident, or episode, all transfigured in the light of divinest poetry. Apollo descending to earth in the blackness of his wrath ; the bright-eyed goddess staying the half-drawn sword of Achilles in the council of the kings ; sweet-voiced Nestor pouring forth the story of his youthful prowess ; Chryses praying to the archer-god ; Olympus trembling with the nod of Zeus ; Ulysses staying the runaway Greeks in their race to their ships ; the assembled host, reverent before the priest, offering their perfect hecatombs to the immortals ; Helen on the walls of Troy, entrancing the elders of the city with her divine beauty ; Agamemnon sorrowing over the wounded Menelaus ; the Greeks, with measured tread and silent as one man, marching into battle ; Athena arming herself in her fringed ægis whereon sat plumed Terror, Strife, Valor, and the dire Gorgon head ; Hector laying off his helmet with its nodding crest to caress his frightened child ; the thunderbolt falling before the terrified horses

of Diomed ; Achilles sitting at the door of his tent, delighting his soul with the harp and song, and starting up to receive the envoys of Agamemnon ; Hector with the Trojans boarding the ships of the Greeks ; Sleep and Death bearing the dead Sarpedon to his native Lycia ; the fight over the body of Patroclus ; the Trojan host panic-stricken at the shout of Achilles from the trench ; Achilles warned by the voice of his horse Xanthus ; the descent of the gods to battle ; Achilles' fearful struggle with the river ; the death of Hector ; Priam kissing the hand that had slain his son ; — these are Homer.

When we turn from the *Iliad* to the *Odyssey*, we pass into a different world. And what a world of infinite variety and beauty ! The *Iliad* echoes with the din of war. The *Odyssey* is a story of adventure, full of the wild and thrilling, but not wanting in sweet pictures of idyllic charm. The poet takes us into the wonderland of the early world. At the Phæacian court we hear Ulysses, the wanderer, tell a story more marvelous than that which Othello poured into the listening ear of Desdemona : —

“Of antres vast and deserts idle,
Rough quarries, rocks, and hills whose heads touch heaven ;
And of the cannibals that each other eat,
The anthropophagi, and men whose heads
Do grow beneath their shoulders.”

We yield ourselves in imagination to the delightful charm. We creep with the timid voyagers over unknown seas where the rosy-fingered dawn ever reveals some new surprise ; we linger with the Lotus-

eaters ; we escape the Cyclops, and the Læstrygonians, and the charms of Circe ; we pass the Sirens' isle, with its

“ Magic casements, opening on the foam
Of perilous seas in faery lands forlorn ; ”

we escape the perils of Scylla and Charybdis ; tarry a whole month in the island of the Sun, and when the foolish mariners slay the sacred oxen of “ the god that travels above,” we gaze upon the awful prodigies that ensued : “ The skins were creeping and the flesh bellowing upon the spits, both the roast and the raw, and there was a sound as of the voice of kine.” The curse follows the impious men, and they set sail again only to be swallowed up in the storm, Ulysses alone coming safe to Calypso's isle. Released eventually by Calypso, the hero comes to the last stage of his wanderings — to the land of the Phæacians. And here the creative fancy of the poet wins its greatest triumph. What happy land is this, ruled over by the gracious king Alcinoüs, like an immortal, while his lady wife and queen “ sits by the hearth, in the light of the fire, weaving yarn of sea-purple stain, a wonder to behold ! ” There, too, is their daughter, the peerless maiden Nausicaa. In their palace there is a brightness as of the sun and moon through the high-roofed halls. In their garden “ the fruit never faileth winter or summer, enduring all the year through. Pear upon pear waxes old, and apple upon apple — yea, and cluster ripens upon cluster of the grape, and fig upon fig.” Who are these mysterious people who

have naught to do with other men, who are near of kin to the gods, and whom the gods often visit, feasting at the board with them, seated by their side? Who are these luxurious sailors, "who care not for bow nor quiver, but only for mast and oar; whose ships have no pilots nor rudders, but themselves understand the thoughts and intents of the men, and traverse the great gulf of the sea, ever shrouded in mist and cloud, and fearing no wreck nor ruin?" We can give no answer; nor is it needful. Must we rationalize every fiction of the poet? The Phæacian realm lies not on earth. It is the poet's dream of a happy land.

The *Odyssey* has the supreme excellence of absorbing interest. The old story-teller rivets our gaze at the outset, and "holds us with his glittering eye," even as the wedding guest was held. From those strange opening scenes of the poem, where the lawless suitors throng the great hall of Ulysses in his absence, slaying and eating his "trailing-footed, crumpled-horned oxen," and paying their court to Penelope while the young Telemachus, her son, is unable to repel their insolence — all through the poem, amid the various adventures of the hero, until his final return, when the suitors are slain and the king is once more restored to his own, the *Odyssey* maintains its wondrous charm, the charm of the world's earliest and greatest story-book.

The main themes of Greek tragedy have been summed up by Milton: —

"Presenting Thebes, or Pelops' line,
Or the tale of Troy divine."

The story of the Pelopidæ may be read in the great trilogy of Æschylus. In the *Agamemnon* that hero returns to his home after his ten years' absence at Troy, but only to be slain. When the herald has announced his approach the Chorus break forth into their wild mysterious wail—a wail for the past, with dim bodings of calamity to come. Helen is the immediate cause:—

“ Who gave that war-wed, strife-upstirring one
The name of Helen, ominous of ill?
For all too plainly she
Hath been to men and ships,
And towers as doom of Hell.
From bower of gorgeous curtains forth she sailed
With breeze of Zephyr Titan-born and strong;
And hosts of many men,
Hunters that bore the shield,
Went on the track of those who steered their boat
Unseen to leafy banks of Simois,
On her account who came,
Dire cause of strife with bloodshed in her train.”

But there are other causes. Prosperity brings pride, and pride goeth before destruction. The gods themselves are envious of men. Then, too, ancestral crimes are working out their own punishment. The sins of the fathers are visited upon the children. And now the chariot of *Agamemnon* draws near. By his side is the pale, prophetic *Cassandra*. Then follow the lesser captives, the victorious soldiers with their trophies and all the train of the conqueror. The Chorus change their boding wail to the chant of welcome:—

“ Come then, king, thou son of Atreus,
Waster of the towers of Troia,

What of greeting and of homage
Shall I give, nor overshooting,
Nor due meed of honor missing ? ”

Clytemnestra now appears with words of hollow greeting, like another Lady Macbeth, when Duncan passes under her battlements : —

“ I hail my lord as watch-dog of the fold,
The stay that saves the ship, of lofty roof
Main column-prop, a father's only child,
Land that beyond all hope the sailor sees,
Morn of great brightness following after storm,
Clear-flowing fount to thirsty traveler.”

Then she bids her attendants strew before the king purple tapestries, as he steps down from the car of triumph. Let not the foot that hath trampled upon Ilium touch now the vulgar earth. But Agamemnon protests. “ Honor me as a man, but not as a god,” he cries. Doomed monarch ! He knows his danger ; but praise is sweet to hear, and he is overruled. Only he removes his sandals, as if to avert the curse, and with words of prayer —

“ As I tread
Upon these robes, sea-purpled, may no wrath
From glance of gods smite on me from afar ” —

he passes to the chamber where death awaits him.

But though the dark powers of doom have wrought the destruction of Agamemnon, his murderers must not escape. The second play of the trilogy, the *Choëphori* (Libation Bearers), is a drama of retribution. Here, as in the *Agamemnon*, we have the warning note struck at the very outset : —

“Those who judge of dreams
Told, calling God to witness, that the souls
Below were wroth and vexed with those that slew them.”

Years have elapsed since the death of Agamemnon. Meantime in a distant land his son, Orestes, has grown to man's estate. He feels that a work is laid upon him to perform. With Hamlet he might cry out:—

“The time is out of joint: O cursèd spite,
That ever I was born to set it right!”

He returns to the home of his ancestors. His sister, Electra, recognizes him, and together the two plan the deed of vengeance and deliverance. Ægisthus is first slain. Clytemnestra hearing the tumult comes hurrying in:—

Cly. What means all this? What cry is this thou mak'st?

Servant. I say the dead are killing one that lives.

Cly. Ah me! I see the drift of thy dark speech;
By guile we perish, as of old we slew;
Let some one hand at once axe strong to slay;
Let's see if we are conquered or can conquer,
For to that point of evil am I come.

Enter ORESTES and PYLADES from the other door.

Ores. 'T is thee I seek: he there has had enough.

[Pointing to the dead body of ÆGISTHUS.]

Cly. Ah me! my loved Ægisthus! Art thou dead?

Ores. Lov'st thou the man? Then in the self-same tomb
Shalt thou now lie, nor in his death desert him.

Cly. (*baring her bosom*). Hold, boy! Respect this breast
of mine, my son,

Whence thou full oft, asleep, with toothless gums,
Hast sucked the milk that sweetly fed thy life.

Ores. What shall I do, my Pylades? Shall I
Through this respect forbear to slay my mother?

- Pyl.* Where, then, are Loxias'¹ other oracles,
 The Pythian counsels, and the fast-woven vows?
 Have all men hostile rather than the gods.
- Ores.* My judgment goes with thine; thou speakest well.

[*To CLYTEMNESTRA.*

Follow: I mean to slay thee where he lies,
 For while he lived thou held'st him far above
 My father. Sleep thou with him in thy death,
 Since thou lov'st him, and whom thou should'st
 love hat'st."

Orestes drags her from the stage. Her doom is sealed. The son must slay his mother; so appalling are the intertangling fates that enmesh these men and women of the Grecian legend — scarce-responsible creatures, scions of ancestral houses, clothed in purple for their petty hour, but ever mere pieces in the game of the high gods above them!

Orestes returns to the scene. 'T is all in vain that he would clear himself from his awful crime, as acting under the command of Apollo. Alas! a mother's blood cries for vengeance, and as the play closes the dread shapes of the Furies appear in the background: —

"Dark-robed, and all their tresses entwined
 With serpents."

The wretched youth knows too well their meaning.
 He cries: —

"These are no phantom terrors that I see.
 Full clear they are my mother's vengeful hounds."

And he rushes forth to be a wanderer on the face of the earth, the "vengeful hounds" ever tracking his steps.

¹ Apollo.

The third play of the great trilogy, the *Eumenides*, is the story of deliverance. The wretched Orestes has come in his wanderings to Delphi, to the shrine of Apollo, the god under whose authority he has acted, and to whom he must look for his redemption. Together they repair to Athens, followed ever by the malignant Furies. Here, in the sacred seat of Athena herself, that goddess solemnly institutes a tribunal for the trial of Orestes, — a tribunal to be revered, in all later ages, as the highest judicial authority, — the famous court of the Areopagus. Here the pleadings are heard, for and against Orestes, and the votes are equal for acquittal and condemnation. But Athena now declares the merciful principle, to be recognized forever in Athenian law, that equality of votes shall mean acquittal. And so the curse is removed from Orestes, and he is once more a free man. The story of Mycenæ is ended.

The story of the Labdacidæ, the royal house of Thebes, is told by Sophocles in a triad of plays (not technically a “trilogy”). In the *Œdipus Tyrannus* we see the king, *Œdipus*, at the height of his power. A pestilence is raging, and the people have seated themselves on the palace steps. With all confidence they call upon the king to deliver them now, as he had done aforetime, when he solved the riddle of the dreadful Sphinx. The king promises his aid. The oracle announces that the murderer of *Laius* must be cast forth. But where shall he be found? That murder had always been wrapped in impenetrable mystery. *Œdipus* proclaims his purpose to hunt him out, and at the same time impre-

cates upon him the most awful curses. He then adds : —

“ If in my house, I knowing it, he dwells —
May every curse I spake on my head fall.”

Words of terrible significance, full of the awful “irony” of the Greek drama. For *Œdipus*, years before, had done a murder, not knowing his victim, and the murdered man was *Laius* ! The search goes on ; the poor king is himself soon enmeshed in a web of evidence. Horrors on horrors accumulate, and the wretched monarch rushes forth from *Thebes* a homeless outcast.

At the opening of the second play, the *Œdipus* at *Colonus*, some years have elapsed. No picture of more appealing beauty and tenderness could be imagined than the first scene. Milton must have had it in mind when he brings his *Samson* upon the stage, sightless and led by an attendant : —

“ A little further lend thy guiding hand,
To these dark steps a little further on.”

The blind old king has come in his wanderings to a suburb of *Athens* — to *Colonus*, the birthplace of *Sophocles* himself, radiant now and forever in the immortal beauty of the poet’s caressing verse : —

“ All in bloom
With laurel, olive, vine ; while nightingales,
On crowding wing, sing sweet within the grove.”

And who is the guide of the blind old man ? It is *Antigone*, the daughter, dear, faithful, and true to the very last. Here it is that the oracle has told

Œdipus that his woe-worn life shall find its end. Theseus, the king of Athens, comes out to meet him. The two kings enter the sacred grove together. Suddenly the sky darkens, the warning notes of the thunder begin to mutter, and Œdipus knows that his hour is at hand. Soon is heard from the depths the divine call, "Œdipus, Œdipus, why dost thou delay?" And how he passed away not even Theseus, who was with him, could tell; but the after legend could only say, "He was not; for God took him."

In the *Antigone*, the third play of the series, we have the story of a sister's devotion to the memory of her brother — a devotion which with unflinching heroism meets death itself rather than fail in sisterly duty. *Antigone*, as the heroine of the play, is the object of chief interest, from the very first scene, in which she appears in confidential conversation with her sister *Ismene*, —

"Death's purpose flashing in her face," —

and discloses her resolution to perform the burial rites for her brother *Polynices*, whose body has been cast out by King *Creon* to be a prey to the dogs and vultures of the Theban plain, while death had been proclaimed as the punishment for him who should give it sepulture. She proceeds to carry out her purpose, unaided by *Ismene*, but is detected and dragged before *Creon*; and then it is that she rises to a height of moral grandeur that is fairly sublime, in her appeal from the law of a mortal to that higher law, written not upon tables of stone, but in the eternal instincts of the human soul: —

"*Creon.* And thou didst dare to disobey these laws !

Antig. Yes, for it was not Zeus who gave them forth ;
Nor Justice, dwelling with the gods below,
Who traced these laws for all the sons of men.
Nor did I deem thy edicts strong enough,
That thou, a mortal man, shouldst overpass
The unwritten laws of God that know not change.
They are not of to-day nor yesterday,
But live forever ; nor can man assign
When first they sprang to being."

But the penalty for breaking the law, Creon's law, is death ; and Antigone is dragged away to the cave that is to be her living tomb. It is the same Antigone that led her father to his restful death at Colonus. De Quincey, in a rapture at the impassioned beauty of her situation in connection with her character, cries out : " Holy heathen — daughter of God, before God was known, flower from Paradise after Paradise was closed ; that quitting all things for which flesh languishes, safety and honor, a palace and a home, didst make thyself a houseless pariah lest the poor pariah king, thy outcast father, should want a hand to lead him in his darkness, or a voice to whisper comfort in his misery ; angel that bad'st depart forever the glories of thy own bridal day lest he that had shared thy nursery in childhood should want the honors of a funeral ; idolatrous yet Christian Lady that in the spirit of martyrdom trod'st alone the yawning billows of the grave, flying from earthly hopes, lest everlasting despair should settle upon the grave of thy brother ! "

And here, perhaps, we might think that the play

should end; but the dramatist was not satisfied without bringing upon Creon, the wrong-doer, the consequences of his cruelty, obstinacy, and impiety. His son, Hæmon, who is betrothed to Antigone, forces his way into the cave and slays himself upon her prostrate form, she having already taken her own life rather than endure the agonies of a lingering death by starvation. And while the horror-stricken king is yet bewailing his son, "one woe doth tread upon another's heels," a messenger brings to him the tidings that his wife, too, in despair for the loss of her child, has dealt herself the stroke of death.

Perhaps it is inartistic, as Mr. Symonds suggests, that Sophocles should thus, at the very close of the play, divert our attention and sympathy from Antigone, the innocent and martyred heroine, to Creon, the cause of all the suffering. But certain it is that we find our hearts softening for the monarch amid the overwhelming wreck of all his happiness. We feel that he, too, must soon follow the others; for there is nothing now left for him to live for, in this heritage of woe that has come upon him. In the bitterness of his soul he cries out:—

"Lead me, ye guards,
Lead me forth quickly; lead me out of sight,
And come thou, then, come thou,
The last of all my dooms, that brings to me
Best boon, my life's last day.

.
All near at hand
Is turned to evil; and upon my head
There falls a doom far worse than I can bear."

Between Euripides and his compeers, Æschylus and Sophocles, there seems to be a great gulf fixed. With one hand he keeps fast hold on a world which is passing away; with the other he is reaching forward to the far-off feelings, emotions, and experience of a world that is to come. Grandeur is the characteristic of the shows and forms that fill the swelling scene of Æschylus. We are moving among gods and heroes. All of his personages seem idealized and lifted to a higher plane than that of the actualities of human life. Thus in the *Prometheus* the scene is indeed upon earth, but the personages are super-terrestrial, divine — Hephæstus and Hermes, Oceanus and the sea-nymphs, the Titan sufferer himself — all save Io; and she, though a mortal, is by her relations to Zeus lifted beyond the human pale. The scene itself lies in a region of no common tread. It is upon rugged cliffs where the sea beats — inaccessible to mortal foot. So Agamemnon and Clytemnestra and Cassandra, so the seven assailants of Thebes, and likewise its majestic defenders, are cast in no common mould. And even *The Persians*, though dealing with contemporary history, is shown by De Quincey to be invested with the same ideal grandeur.

As for Sophocles, no words can overstate his supreme merit — that faultless beauty of his creations, that finish and perfection which the drama, rough-hewn by Æschylus, seems to take beneath his forming hand. We read that Sophocles, when fifteen years old, was chosen for his beauty to lead the chorus of boys who sang the victory of Salamis.

Did nature, that endowed him with beauty of person, endow him also beyond his generation with the love and perception of beauty? Beauty is the single word to characterize his dramatic excellence; and with beauty we understand the Greek feeling for symmetry as well; that sense of proportion and fitness which was so dear to them. In Sophocles is no excess — “nothing too much.” He is a typical Greek, and his work is typical of the blithe race with whom beauty was religion, whose words and works are ever proclaiming as their final utterance, —

“Beauty is truth, truth beauty; that is all
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.”

But the characteristic of Euripides is surely the human touch. Here are still gods and heroes, but they are humanized. They are become like unto us. We are moving among men and women. In his knowledge of human nature Euripides is an anticipation of Shakespeare. In spite of his proverbial misogyny he has given us women of unsurpassed nobility. The “*spretæ injuria formæ*” transforms Medea into a fury, but in *Alcestis* he shows us “how divine a woman may become.” Euripides has received hard treatment at the hands of his critics, from Aristophanes to Schlegel. The counts against him are many. He is too philosophical, too rhetorical. His people are too disputatious. There is too much striving for effect. True, all of it, to some extent; but all this will count but little in the scale against him who was the poet of life and character, the poet of human nature: —

“Euripides the human,
With his droppings of warm tears.”

Euripides is an interesting study in his special characteristics. He belongs to the romantic school, if we may be allowed a modern word, — a romantic poet before romanticism was formulated and named. He, too, seems breaking away from the classic ideals of his time. He will endure no trammels; with him all is free and unrestricted — “wild above rule or art.”

A good idea of his manner of handling a theme may be obtained by comparing his *Phœnissæ* with the *Seven against Thebes* of *Æschylus* where the two poets treat the same story. We may here see how Euripides elaborates and embellishes his material. The play of *Æschylus* is a grand poem cast in the dramatic form, — tragic in the highest degree, — the catastrophe being the death of the two brothers slain by each other's hand. It opens with the noble speech of Eteocles, the king, calling upon the citizens to support him in this hour of peril when the foe are at the very gates of the town. Then follows the great scene, occupying a third of the play, where the Theban scout makes his report of the condition of affairs outside the walls, and tells the names and devices of the seven Argive chieftains who are to lead the assault, each stationed at one of the seven gates. Eteocles nothing daunted appoints, with splendid eulogy, his Theban champions to confront them — man against man. He reminds us of *Macbeth* in the hour of his extremity. His courage is superb. He cries: —

“Man hath no armor, war hath no array
At which this heart can tremble; no device
Nor blazonry of battle can inflict
The wounds they menace; crests and clashing bells
Without the spear are toothless.”

When the scout closes his enumeration with the name of Polynices, then, to the horror of the Chorus, Eteocles announces his purpose himself to confront his brother: —

“’T is I will face this warrior: who can boast
A right to equal mine? Chief against chief,
Foe against foe, and brother against brother!
What, ho! my greaves, my spear, my armor proof
Against the storm of stones! My stand is chosen.”

He rushes to the field, and the play then hastens rapidly to its completion. The Chorus sing of the woes of the royal house, and then a messenger arrives, reporting the city saved, but the brothers slain by each other's hand. Then follows the closing scene, which Æschylus seems to have treated with an eye to dramatic effect. The funeral cortège enters, and when the bodies of the brothers are set down, the sisters, Antigone and Ismene, bewail their untimely death. A herald now makes proclamation that the body of Polynices shall be cast forth unburied. Whereupon Antigone announces her purpose to defy the law and perform the funeral rites. And so the play closes.

The Phœnissæ is twice as long as the Seven against Thebes, but the main action is essentially the same, while the additional length results from the greater number of dramatis personæ intro-

duced: Jocasta, Creon, Teiresias, Menœceus, CEdipus, and Polynices not appearing at all in the "Seven." The play opens with the usual Euripidean prologue in which Jocasta, the mother of the king, tells us that she has arranged for Polynices to enter the city under a flag of truce, for a conference with his brother Eteocles, with a view to a possible adjustment of their quarrel. In the next scene the information which was given in *Æschylus* by the scout is imparted to us by Euripides through a device picturesque and beautiful. The girl Antigone appears, with her aged attendant, upon the battlements of the town, where he points out to her the various chieftains of the besieging army. Of course the hint is taken from Homer, but the scene has the characteristic touch of Euripides. Then follows the interview between the two brothers, giving occasion to much admirable rhetoric, but all in vain. They grow more bitter and part from each other in hatred and contempt — Polynices returning to his friends, the besiegers, and Eteocles proceeding to make the final arrangements for the impending conflict. When Creon tells him that he must appoint seven champions for the seven gates he replies: —

"It shall be so; and as thou dost advise
I will appoint a chieftain for each gate —
To equal foes opposing equal champions.
But yet to name each one would be delay
Unseemly when beneath our very walls
The foe doth lurk."

The last lines are curious, as evidently aimed at

Æschylus, in criticism of the long description of the champions given in the "Seven." Euripides at the same time saw an opportunity to excuse himself for declining competition with the splendid portraiture of the warriors given by his great predecessor. Next follows the incident of the story of Menœceus, who sacrifices himself for his country — the oracle having foretold that by his voluntary death the city might be saved. Æschylus made no use of this legend, but Euripides could not neglect the opportunity afforded him by a pathetic suggestion, though it was dramatically unnecessary to the main action. In the next scene a messenger appears and calls for the queen, Jocasta, in order to report to her the repulse of the foe. To her eager, anxious questioning about the fate of her two sons he seems to evade reply. "Forbear the rest," he says, —

"Joc. Nay, but I must not forbear.

Thou dost conceal some evil with dark words.

Mess. I cannot speak the ill after the good.

Joc. Nay, but thou shalt."

Whereupon he tells her that he left her sons upon the point of engaging in single combat. The queen in her horror calls upon her daughter Antigone, and they rush forth, if perchance they may yet prevent the fight. But in the next scene a messenger appears to report the worst. The mother had come too late — only in time to find her warrior sons prostrate on the battlefield. Eteocles gasping for breath reaches forth his hand already cold with the coming on of death. He is able to utter no word

to his mother; "only his eyes speak in tears his love." His brother Polynices has just strength enough to beg for burial in his native earth. And when he gasps forth in his last breath, — "Fare ye well, the darkness gathers round me," — the mother can endure no more, but grasps the fratricidal sword and gives herself the death. The messenger has hardly finished his story when, to crown the horrors of the play, the aged Œdipus enters, with "blind, staff-guided steps," and joins his despairing wail to the lamentations of his daughters over the fallen sons and brothers : —

"O had Cithæron sunk
Within the unfathomed depths of Tartarus
Or ever it preserved my life. . . .
And now I, whither shall I go ?
Who shall be now the guide to these dark steps ? "

From the brief account here given of the Phœnissæ it will be seen that whatever be its faults it is fairly crowded with incident, treated with the pathetic human touch of a master.

The Aristophanic comedy is one long revel of fun, frolic, and absurdity. Its particular characteristic is extravagance. Frere speaks of it as a "grave, humorous, impossible, great lie." When we begin to read Aristophanes let us understand at the outset that we are to be surprised at nothing. Nothing is too sacred for him. His comedies are not comedies in the modern sense of the word. The comedy of society, of typical people, of typical situations, arose later. Of that comedy but few

fragments survive, and only from the plays of the Latin comic writers, who were avowed imitators of the Greek, can we form any adequate idea of its character. But the Aristophanic comedy was, in the main, personal and political, satirical of public men and events, with a license in language almost incredible. To understand its many allusions, jokes, puns, — the points of the play in question, — we must travel back, in imagination, to the little Greek capital of more than twenty centuries ago, and must know something of the political situation, something of the social life and gossip of the day ; in a word, we must live again in ancient Athens. Three of the comedies of Aristophanes may be called the “ war plays.” He began to write soon after the opening of the great struggle between Athens and Sparta, that “ Thirty Years War ” which soon grew so burdensome, and resulted so disastrously for Athens. Now in war time there is always a peace party, and so it was in Athens. The *Acharnians*, the earliest surviving comedy of Aristophanes, written when the war was some half dozen years old, is a protest against its further continuance. The play takes its name from *Acharnæ*, one of the country villages near Athens, the Chorus being composed of old men belonging to that place. The leading character of the comedy is *Dikaiopolis*, an honest farmer who is tired to death of the war. He has been living in the cramped life of the city, where the country people have had to come for refuge, and he wants to get back to his little farm, where he never heard the word “ buy,”

because he raised his own olives and garlic on his own land. Through his opposition to the continuance of the war he comes into some danger and is brought to trial, but finally acquitted. In this play the poet has sought to contrast, in vivid manner, the blessings of peace and the calamities of war. It is full of allusions to tickle the ear of an Athenian audience — banquets with all the delicacies of the table, of which the war had so long deprived them, together with their attendant pleasures — the chaplets, the flute-players, and the dancers. The closing scene of the comedy was probably prepared with great care to form a grand tableau, as the final illustration of the moral of the play — Peace. Lamachus, a general in the war, comes limping in, wounded on one of his expeditions, and calling loudly for ointment and bandages. On the other hand, Dikaiopolis appears with a company of fellow-revelers just ready to engage in the festivity of an elaborate banquet, the preparations for which the audience have seen going on in the preceding scene.

There are two other war comedies, the *Peace* and the *Lysistrata*. In the *Peace* a discontented Athenian, Trygæus, rides up to heaven on a beetle to intercede with Zeus and procure peace. All the gods are gone away except Hermes. The gods, he says, are disgusted with the Greeks and have gone off to get out of their way, leaving War in their place with instructions to pound the Greeks to pieces in an enormous mortar; and as for Peace, War has cast her into a deep pit and heaped stones

upon her. Trygæus, however, manages to draw out Peace, and brings her and her attendants, Theoria (Holiday) and Opora (Plenty), with great rejoicing to Athens. In the *Lysistrata*, written when the war had dragged on to its twentieth year, the women are represented as laying hold of the government with a view to ending the struggle. Now these three plays represent the burning question of the time — the war with the Lacedæmonians. But other interests, too, there were which engaged the attention of men, and which came under the lash of Aristophanes. In certain comedies the personal element comes out strongly. In the *Knights*, Cleon, the demagogue, is assailed. Terribly does the poet belabor the upstart tanner, this creature of vulgar birth and foul tongue, whom he so despised. The whole essence and spirit of the wrath of Aristophanes might be said to be concentrated in that cry of the *Knights* as they sweep down upon the wretched demagogue : —

“Close around him and confound him, the confounder of
us all.

Pelt him, pummel him and mawl him ; rummage, ransack,
overhaul him,

Overbear him and out-bawl him ; bear him down and bring
him under.

Bellow like a burst of thunder, robber ! harpy ! sink of
plunder !

Rogue and villain ! rogue and cheat ! rogue and villain, I
repeat ! ”

In the *Clouds* it is Socrates who is satirized ; in the *Frogs* it is Euripides. In each of these plays we see the fight of the conservative — in the *Clouds*

against the teachers of new-fangled manners and morals; in the *Frogs* against innovators in poetry like Euripides, who not merely in this play, but elsewhere, received the hardest treatment from the hands of his great contemporary.

But no short account can present any adequate idea of the abounding wealth of Aristophanes. This wealth, indeed, is a notable characteristic — this unending resource, extending in every direction. His fertility and facility in the use of character and situation, yea, even in word, are amazing. They are seen, too, in his transitions, his contrasts. Never was the juxtaposition of the incongruous more fully realized. In the midst of the broadest farce, suddenly ring out the notes of sweetest lyric melody — some plaint of nightingale; some joyous song of the cloud-maidens that float on forever through the depths of ether; some solemn chant of the rapt “initiates” of the Elysian Fields.

The fact that so small a part of the Greek drama has survived the wreck of time may well cause the keenest regret. We possess hardly a tenth of the work of Æschylus and Sophocles; and though we have a larger number of plays from Euripides, they form but a small part of the dramas credited to him. As for Phrynicus, Agathon, Ion of Chios, and the other tragic writers, contemporaries or successors of the “great triad” — they are mere names for us.

In comedy, too, the loss has been immense. Of the earlier comic writers Aristophanes is the only survivor, and we have from him not a quarter of

the plays he is said to have written. From the New Comedy, of which Menander was the acknowledged master, we have not a single play — only fragments. Says Mahaffy, — “There is no branch of Greek literature which seems to have been more prolific than comedy ; and yet, of the many hundreds of pieces cited, there is not a single complete specimen surviving.”

It is not intended nor is it possible to give in this introduction a complete account of Greek poetry. The object has been to indicate some of its important phases, though with necessarily inadequate treatment. While the Epic and the Drama are the chief treasure left to us, enough has survived of the Lyric (outside the dramatic choruses) to show us that this was indeed “a song in many keys.” In order of time the Lyric follows the Epic, and from one of its forms — the choral ode — was developed the Drama, the ode or chorus continuing to form a characteristic and beautiful feature in its construction. But of the many varieties of choral poetry enumerated in the ancient writers little now remains. From Pindar we have some forty complete poems of the class called *Epinicia* or Odes of Victory, but only fragments are left to represent the various other departments of lyric verse in which he excelled. His great triumphal odes are a special study. They are the delight of the scholar, but in the changed conditions of modern life cannot appeal to-day to readers generally as they did to the old Greek world. Says Mr. Jebb : “The

glory of his song has passed forever from the world with the sound of the rolling harmonies on which it once was borne, with the splendor of rushing chariots and athletic forms around which it threw its radiance, with the white-pillared cities by the Ægean or Sicilian sea in which it wrought its spell, with the beliefs or joys which it ennobled; but those who love his poetry, and who strive to enter into its high places, can still know that they breathe a pure and bracing air, and can still feel vibrating through a clear, calm sky the strong pulse of the eagle's wings as he soars with steady eyes against the sun."

But if Pindar is rather for the few, there are others of the earlier poets whose appeal is more general. The strains (alas! too few) of Tyrtæus, of Mimnermus, of Sappho, and of Simonides, with their burden of pathetic fervor, of tender melancholy, or of joyous appreciation of the nature about us and the love within us, must have their perennial charm, because they vibrate to that one touch of nature which makes the whole world kin.

With the passing away of the great dramatic period Greek poetry enters upon its decline. With the conquests of Alexander, Greek civilization and culture are more widely diffused. Alexandria becomes a new literary centre. Here and elsewhere poetry is written, though rarely with the fresh spontaneous charm of its early forms. It is now the "child of an age that lectures, not creates." Still, much of this later poetry, albeit more artificial, has the Greek sense of beauty yet palpitating

within it which will make it a joy forever. Theocritus and the Sicilian brotherhood must e'en take their pleasure in all that is beautiful while they may; and above all, their pleasure in song. "Do but sing," cries one of their shepherds: —

"There is no more sunshine nor singing
Under the grave, in the realm of the dead where all is
forgotten."

At the beginning of the Christian Era the great epochs of Greek poetry have passed away. We still, however, find polished verse written on a variety of themes. The old Greek fire, too, flashes up at intervals in the mystical outpourings of Neoplatonism, and in the verse of Nonnus, Quintus, Smyrnæus, and Musæus. Proclus' Prayer to the Muses is an exquisite strain — in part a wail, but in the main an aspiration, a prayer for safe guidance to the haven of rest, —

"Where the immortals are, when this life's fever
Is left behind as a dread gulf o'erpassed;
And souls, like mariners, escaped forever,
Throng on the happy foreland, saved at last."

With Proclus (450 A. D.), it has been said, the long catalogue of Poets may end — the line that reaches back, through fifteen centuries, to Homer.

GREEK POETS IN ENGLISH VERSE.

HOMER.

ILIAD, I. 1-430.

THE QUARREL OF ACHILLES AND AGAMEMNON.

The Invocation ; Chryses, the Priest ; the Pestilence.

ACHILLES' wrath, to Greece the direful spring
Of woes unnumbered, heavenly goddess, sing !
That wrath which hurled to Pluto's gloomy reign
The souls of mighty chiefs untimely slain ;
Whose limbs unburied on the naked shore,
Devouring dogs and hungry vultures tore ;
Since great Achilles and Atrides strove,
Such was the sovereign doom, and such the will of
Jove !

Declare, O Muse ! in what ill-fated hour
Sprung the fierce strife, from what offended power ?
Latona's son a dire contagion spread,
And heaped the camp with mountains of the dead ;
The king of men his reverend priest defied,
And for the king's offense the people died.

For Chryses sought with costly gifts to gain
His captive daughter from the victor's chain.
Suppliant the venerable father stands,
Apollo's awful ensigns grace his hands :

By these he begs ; and lowly bending down,
Extends the sceptre and the laurel crown.
He sued to all, but chief implored for grace
The brother-kings of Atreus' royal race.

“Ye kings and warriors! may your vows be
crowned,

And Troy's proud walls lie level with the ground.
May Jove restore you, when your toils are o'er,
Safe to the pleasures of your native shore.
But oh! relieve a wretched parent's pain,
And give Chryseis to these arms again ;
If mercy fail, yet let my presents move,
And dread avenging Phœbus, son of Jove.”

The Greeks in shouts their joint assent declare,
The priest to reverence and release the fair.
Not so Atrides : he, with kingly pride,
Repulsed the sacred sire, and thus replied :

“Hence on thy life, and fly these hostile plains,
Nor ask, presumptuous, what the king detains ;
Hence, with thy laurel crown, and golden rod,
Nor trust too far those ensigns of thy god.
Mine is thy daughter, priest, and shall remain ;
And prayers, and tears, and bribes, shall plead in
vain,

Till time shall rifle every youthful grace,
And age dismiss her from my cold embrace,
In daily labors of the loom employed,
Or doomed to deck the bed she once enjoyed.
Hence then! To Argos shall the maid retire
Far from her native soil and weeping sire.”

The trembling priest along the shore returned,
And in the anguish of a father mourned.

Disconsolate, not daring to complain,
Silent he wandered by the sounding main :
Till, safe at distance, to his god he prays,
The god who darts around the world his rays.

“ O Smintheus ! ¹ sprung from fair Latona's line,
Thou guardian power of Cilla the divine,
Thou source of light whom Tenedos adores,
And whose bright presence gilds thy Chrysa's
shores :

If e'er with wreaths I hung thy sacred fane,
Or fed the flames with fat of oxen slain ;
God of the silver bow ! thy shafts employ,
Avenge thy servant, and the Greeks destroy.”

Thus Chryses prayed. The favoring power attends,

And from Olympus' lofty tops descends.
Bent was his bow, the Grecian hearts to wound ;
Fierce as he moved, his silver shafts resound.
Breathing revenge, a sudden night he spread,
And gloomy darkness rolled around his head.
The fleet in view, he twanged his deadly bow,
And hissing fly the feathered fates below.
On mules and dogs the infection first began,
And last, the vengeful arrows fixed in man.
For nine long nights through all the dusky air
The pyres, thick-flaming, shot a dismal glare.
But ere the tenth revolving day was run,
Inspired by Juno, Thetis' godlike son
Convened to council all the Grecian train ;
For much the goddess mourned her heroes slain.

¹ Epithet of Apollo.

*The Assembly of Greeks; the Quarrel of Achilles
and Agamemnon.*

The assembly seated, rising o'er the rest,
Achilles thus the king of men addressed :

“ Why leave we not the fatal Trojan shore,
And measure back the seas we crossed before ?
The plague destroying whom the sword would
spare,

’T is time to save the few remains of war.
But let some prophet or some sacred sage
Explore the cause of great Apollo’s rage ;
Or learn the wasteful vengeance to remove
By mystic dreams, for dreams descend from Jove.
If broken vows this heavy curse have laid,
Let altars smoke, and hecatombs be paid.
So heaven atoned shall dying Greece restore,
And Phœbus dart his burning shafts no more.”

He said and sat : when Calchas thus replied,
Calchas the wise, the Grecian priest and guide,
That sacred seer, whose comprehensive view
The past, the present, and the future knew :
Uprising slow the venerable sage
Thus spoke the prudence and the fears of age :

“ Beloved of Jove, Achilles ! would’st thou know
Why angry Phœbus bends his fatal bow ?
First give thy faith, and plight a prince’s word
Of sure protection, by thy power and sword ;
For I must speak what wisdom would conceal,
And truths, invidious to the great, reveal.
Bold is the task, when subjects, grown too wise,
Instruct a monarch where his error lies ;

For though we deem the short-lived fury past,
'T is sure the mighty will revenge at last."

To whom Pelides: "From thy inmost soul
Speak what thou know'st, and speak without control.

Even by that god I swear, who rules the day,
To whom thy hands the vows of Greece convey,
And whose blest oracles thy lips declare ;
Long as Achilles breathes this vital air,
No daring Greek, of all the numerous band,
Against his priest shall lift an impious hand :
Not even the chief by whom our hosts are led,
The king of kings, shall touch that sacred head."

Encouraged thus, the blameless man replies :
"Nor vows unpaid, nor slighted sacrifice,
But he, our chief, provoked the raging pest,
Apollo's vengeance for his injured priest.
Nor will the god's awakened fury cease,
But plagues shall spread, and funeral fires increase,
Till the great king, without a ransom paid,
To her own Chrysa send the black-eyed maid.
Perhaps, with added sacrifice and prayer,
The priest may pardon, and the god may spare."

The prophet spoke ; when, with a gloomy frown,
The monarch started from his shining throne ;
Black choler filled his breast that boiled with ire,
And from his eyeballs flashed the living fire.
"Augur accursed ! denouncing mischief still,
Prophet of plagues, forever boding ill !
Still must that tongue some wounding message bring,
And still thy priestly pride provoke thy king ?
For this are Phœbus' oracles explored,

To teach the Greeks to murmur at their lord ?
For this with falsehoods is my honor stained ;
Is heaven offended, and a priest profaned,
Because my prize, my beauteous maid, I hold,
And heavenly charms prefer to proffered gold ?
A maid, unmatched in manners as in face,
Skilled in each art, and crowned with every grace.
Not half so dear were Clytemnestra's charms,
When first her blooming beauties blessed my arms.
Yet, if the gods demand her, let her sail ;
Our cares are only for the public weal :
Let me be deemed the hateful cause of all,
And suffer, rather than my people fall.
The prize, the beauteous prize, I will resign,
So dearly valued, and so justly mine.
But since for common good I yield the fair,
My private loss let grateful Greece repair ;
Nor unrewarded let your prince complain,
That he alone has fought and bled in vain."

"Insatiate king !" (Achilles thus replies)

"Fond of the power, but fonder of the prize !
Would'st thou the Greeks their lawful prey should
yield,

The due reward of many a well-fought field ?
The spoils of cities razed, and warriors slain,
We share with justice, as with toil we gain :
But to resume whate'er thy avarice craves,
(That trick of tyrants) may be borne by slaves.
Yet if our chief for plunder only fight,
The spoils of Ilion shall thy loss requite,
Whene'er, by Jove's decree, our conquering powers
Shall humble to the dust her lofty towers."

Then thus the king : " Shall I my prize resign
With tame content, and thou possessed of thine ?
Great as thou art, and like a god in fight,
Think not to rob me of a soldier's right.
At thy demand shall I restore the maid ?
First let the just equivalent be paid,
Such as a king might ask ; and let it be
A treasure worthy her and worthy me.
Or grant me this, or with a monarch's claim
This hand shall seize some other captive dame.
The mighty Ajax shall his prize resign,
Ulysses' spoils, or e'en thy own be mine.
The man who suffers, loudly may complain ;
And rage he may, but he shall rage in vain.
But this when time requires. It now remains
We launch a bark to plough the watery plains,
And waft the sacrifice to Chrysa's shores,
With chosen pilots, and with laboring oars.
Soon shall the fair the sable ship ascend,
And some deputed prince the charge attend.
This Creta's king, or Ajax shall fulfill,
Or wise Ulysses see performed our will ;
Or, if our royal pleasure shall ordain,
Achilles' self conduct her o'er the main ;
Let fierce Achilles, dreadful in his rage,
The god propitiate, and the pest assuage."

At this, Pelides, frowning stern, replied :
" O tyrant, armed with insolence and pride !
Inglorious slave to interest, ever joined
With fraud, unworthy of a royal mind !
What generous Greek, obedient to thy word,
Shall form an ambush, or shall lift the sword ?

What cause have I to war at thy decree?
The distant Trojans never injured me;
To Phthia's realms no hostile troops they led;
Safe in her vales my warlike coursers fed;
Far hence removed, the hoarse-resounding main,
And walls of rocks, secure my native reign,
Whose fruitful soil luxuriant harvests grace,
Rich in her fruits, and in her martial race.
Hither we sailed, a voluntary throng,
To avenge a private, not a public wrong:
What else to Troy the assembled nations draws,
But thine, ungrateful, and thy brother's cause?
Is this the pay our blood and toils deserve,
Disgraced and injured by the man we serve?
And dar'st thou threat to snatch my prize away,
Due to the deeds of many a dreadful day?
A prize as small, O tyrant! matched with thine,
As thy own actions if compared to mine.
Thine in each conquest is the wealthy prey,
Though mine the sweat and danger of the day.
Some trivial present to my ships I bear,
Or barren praises pay the wounds of war.
But know, proud monarch, I'm thy slave no more:
My fleet shall waft me to Thessalia's shore.
Left by Achilles on the Trojan plain,
What spoils, what conquests, shall Atrides gain?"

To this the king: "Fly, mighty warrior! fly,
Thy aid we need not, and thy threats defy:
There want not chiefs in such a cause to fight,
And Jove himself shall guard a monarch's right.
Of all the kings (the gods' distinguished care)
To power superior none such hatred bear;

Strife and debate thy restless soul employ,
And wars and horrors are thy savage joy.
If thou hast strength, 't was Heaven that strength
bestowed,

For know, vain man ! thy valor is from God.
Haste, launch thy vessels, fly with speed away,
Rule thy own realms with arbitrary sway :
I heed thee not, but prize at equal rate
Thy short-lived friendship and thy groundless hate.
Go, threat thy earth-born Myrmidons ; but here
'T is mine to threaten, prince, and thine to fear.
Know, if the god the beauteous dame demand,
My bark shall waft her to her native land ;
But then prepare, imperious prince ! prepare,
Fierce as thou art, to yield thy captive fair :
E'en in thy tent I 'll seize the blooming prize,
Thy loved Briseïs, with the radiant eyes.
Hence shalt thou prove my might, and curse the
hour

Thou stood'st a rival of imperial power ;
And hence to all our host it shall be known
That kings are subject to the gods alone."

Achilles heard, with grief and rage oppressed ;
His heart swelled high and labored in his breast.
Distracting thoughts by turns his bosom ruled,
Now fired by wrath, and now by reason cooled :
That prompts his hand to draw the deadly sword,
Force through the Greeks, and pierce their haughty
lord ;

This whispers soft his vengeance to control,
And calm the rising tempest of his soul.

*Minerva prevents Achilles from drawing his
Sword.*

Just as in anguish of suspense he stayed,
While half unsheathed appeared the glittering blade,
Minerva swift descended from above,
Sent by the sister and the wife of Jove ;
(For both the princes claimed her equal care ;)
Behind she stood, and by the golden hair
Achilles seized ; to him alone confessed ;
A sable cloud concealed her from the rest.
He sees, and sudden to the goddess cries,
(Known by the flames that sparkle from her eyes :)
“ Descends Minerva, in her guardian care,

A heavenly witness of the wrongs I bear
From Atreus' son ! Then let those eyes that view
The daring crime, behold the vengeance too.”

“ Forbear ! ” (the progeny of Jove replies)
“ To calm thy fury I forsake the skies :
Let great Achilles, to the gods resigned,
To reason yield the empire o'er his mind.
By awful Juno this command is given ;
The king and you are both the care of heaven.
The force of keen reproaches let him feel,
But sheathe, obedient, thy revenging steel.
For I pronounce (and trust a heavenly power)
Thy injured honor has its fated hour,
When the proud monarch shall thy arms implore,
And bribe thy friendship with a boundless store.
Then let revenge no longer bear the sway,
Command thy passions, and the gods obey.”

To her Pelides : “ With regardful ear,

'T is just, O goddess ! I thy dictates hear.
Hard as it is, my vengeance I suppress :
Those who revere the gods, the gods will bless."
He said, observant of the blue-eyed maid ;
Then in the sheath returned the shining blade.
The goddess swift to high Olympus flies,
And joins the sacred senate of the skies.

Nor yet the rage his boiling breast forsook,
Which thus redoubling on Atrides broke :
" O monster ! mixed of insolence and fear,
Thou dog in forehead, but in heart a deer !
When wert thou known in ambushed fights to dare,
Or nobly face the horrid front of war ?
'T is ours the chance of fighting fields to try,
Thine to look on, and bid the valiant die.
So much 't is safer through the camp to go,
And rob a subject than despoil a foe.
Scourge of thy people, violent and base !
Sent in Jove's anger on a slavish race,
Who, lost to sense of generous freedom past,
Are tamed to wrongs, or this had been thy last.
Now by this sacred sceptre hear me swear,
Which never more shall leaves or blossoms bear,
Which severed from the trunk (as I from thee)
On the bare mountains left its parent tree ;
This sceptre, formed by tempered steel to prove
An ensign of the delegates of Jove.
From whom the power of laws and justice springs :
(Tremendous oath ! inviolate to kings :)
By this I swear, when bleeding Greece again
Shall call Achilles, she shall call in vain.
When flushed with slaughter, Hector comes to spread

The purpled shore with mountains of the dead,
Then shalt thou mourn the affront thy madness gave,
Forced to deplore, when impotent to save :
Then rage in bitterness of soul to know
This act has made the bravest Greek thy foe.”

He spoke ; and furious hurled against the ground
His sceptre starred with golden studs around ;
Then sternly silent sat. With like disdain,
The raging king returned his frowns again.

Nestor's Speech.

To calm their passion with the words of age,
Slow from his seat arose the Pylian sage,
Experienced Nestor, in persuasion skilled :
Words sweet as honey from his lips distilled :
Two generations now had passed away,
Wise by his rule, and happy by his sway ;
Two ages o'er his native realm he reigned,
And now, the example of the third, remained.
All viewed with awe the venerable man ;
Who thus with mild benevolence began :

“ What shame, what woe is this to Greece ! what
joy

To Troy's proud monarch, and the friends of Troy !
That adverse gods commit to stern debate
The best, the bravest of the Grecian state.
Young as you are, this youthful heat restrain,
Nor think your Nestor's years and wisdom vain.
A godlike race of heroes once I knew,
Such as no more these aged eyes shall view !
Lives there a chief to match Pirithous' fame,
Dryas the bold, or Ceneus' deathless name ;

Theseus, endued with more than mortal might,
Or Polyphemus, like the gods in fight?
With these of old to toils of battle bred,
In early youth my hardy days I led ;
Fired with the thirst which virtuous envy breeds,
And smit with love of honorable deeds.
Strongest of men, they pierced the mountain boar,
Ranged the wild deserts red with monsters' gore,
And from their hills the shaggy Centaurs tore.
Yet these with soft persuasive arts I swayed ;
When Nestor spoke, they listened and obeyed.
If in my youth, e'en these esteemed me wise,
Do you, young warriors, hear my age advise.
Atrides, seize not on the beauteous slave ;
That prize the Greeks by common suffrage gave :
Nor thou, Achilles, treat our prince with pride ;
Let kings be just, and sovereign power preside.
Thee the first honors of the war adorn,
Like gods in strength, and of a goddess born ;
Him, awful majesty exalts above
The powers of earth, and sceptred sons of Jove.
Let both unite with well-consenting mind,
So shall authority with strength be joined.
Leave me, O king, to calm Achilles' rage ;
Rule thou thyself, as more advanced in age.
Forbid it, gods ! Achilles should be lost,
The pride of Greece, and bulwark of our host."

This said, he ceased : the king of men replies ;
"Thy years are awful, and thy words are wise.
But that imperious, that unconquered soul,
No laws can limit, no respect control :
Before his pride must his superiors fall,

His word the law, and he the lord of all?
Him must our hosts, our chiefs, ourself obey?
What king can bear a rival in his sway?
Grant that the gods his matchless force have given;
Has foul reproach a privilege from heaven?"

Here on the monarch's speech Achilles broke,
And furious, thus, and interrupting, spoke :
" Tyrant, I well deserved thy galling chain,
To live thy slave, and still to serve in vain,
Should I submit to each unjust decree :
Command thy vassals, but command not me.
Seize on Briseis, whom the Grecians doomed
My prize of war, yet tamely see resumed ;
And seize secure ; no more Achilles draws
His conquering sword in any woman's cause.
The gods command me to forgive the past ;
But let this first invasion be the last :
For know, thy blood, when next thou dar'st invade,
Shall stream in vengeance on my reeking blade."

The Assembly breaks up.

At this they ceased ; the stern debate expired :
The chiefs in sullen majesty retired.

Achilles with Patroclus took his way,
Where near his tents his hollow vessels lay.
Meantime Atrides launched with numerous oars
A well-rigged ship for Chrysa's sacred shores :
High on the deck was fair Chryseis placed,
And sage Ulysses with the conduct graced :
Safe in her sides the hecatomb they stowed,
Then, swiftly sailing, cut the liquid road.

The host to expiate, next the king prepares,

With pure lustrations and with solemn prayers.
Washed by the briny wave, the pious train
Are cleansed ; and cast the ablutions in the main.
Along the shores whole hecatombs were laid,
And bulls and goats to Phœbus' altars paid.
The sable fumes in curling spires arise,
And waft their grateful odors to the skies.

The army thus in sacred rites engaged,
Atrides still with deep resentment raged.
To wait his will two sacred heralds stood,
Talthybius and Eurybates the good.

"Haste to the fierce Achilles' tent," (he cries)
"Thence bear Briseïs as our royal prize :
Submit he must ; or, if they will not part,
Ourself in arms shall tear her from his heart."

The unwilling heralds act their lord's commands ;
Pensive they walk along the barren sands :
Arrived, the hero in his tent they find,
With gloomy aspect, on his arm reclined.
At awful distance long they silent stand,
Loth to advance, or speak their hard command ;
Decent confusion ! This the godlike man
Perceived, and thus with accent mild began :

"With leave and honor enter our abodes,
Ye sacred ministers of men and gods !
I know your message ; by constraint you came ;
Not you, but your imperious lord I blame.
Patroclus, haste, the fair Briseïs bring ;
Conduct my captive to the haughty king.
But witness, heralds, and proclaim my vow,
Witness to gods above, and men below !
But first, and loudest, to your prince declare,

That lawless tyrant whose commands you bear ;
Unmoved as death Achilles shall remain,
Though prostrate Greece shall bleed at every vein :
The raging chief in frantic passion lost,
Blind to himself, and useless to his host,
Unskilled to judge the future by the past,
In blood and slaughter shall repent at last."

Patroclus now the unwilling beauty brought ;
She, in soft sorrows, and in pensive thought,
Passed silent, as the heralds held her hand,
And oft looked back slow-moving o'er the strand.

*Interview of Achilles with his Goddess-Mother,
Thetis.*

Not so his loss the fierce Achilles bore ;
But sad retiring to the sounding shore,
O'er the wild margin of the deep he hung,
That kindred deep from which his mother sprung ;
There bathed in tears of anger and disdain,
Thus loud lamented to the stormy main :

" O parent goddess ! since in early bloom,
Thy son must fall, by too severe a doom ;
Sure, to so short a race of glory born,
Great Jove in justice should this span adorn.
Honor and fame at least the Thunderer owed ;
And ill he pays the promise of a god,
If yon proud monarch thus thy son defies,
Obscures my glories, and resumes my prize."

Far in the deep recesses of the main,
Where aged Ocean holds his watery reign,
The goddess-mother heard. The waves divide,
And like a mist she rose above the tide ;

Beheld him mourning on the naked shores,
And thus the sorrows of his soul explores :

“ Why grieves my son ? thy anguish let me
share,

Reveal the cause, and trust a parent's care.”

He deeply sighing said : “ To tell my woe,
Is but to mention what too well you know.

From Thebè, sacred to Apollo's name,
(Eëtion's realm) our conquering army came,
With treasure loaded and triumphant spoils,
Whose just division crowned the soldier's toils ;
But bright Chryseïs, heavenly prize ! was led
By vote selected to the general's bed.

The priest of Phœbus sought by gifts to gain
His beauteous daughter from the victor's chain ;
The fleet he reached, and, lowly bending down,
Held forth the sceptre and the laurel crown,
Entreating all ; but chief implored for grace
The brother-kings of Atreus' royal race :

The generous Greeks their joint consent declare,
The priest to reverence, and release the fair.

Not so, Atrides : he, with wonted pride,

The sire insulted, and his gifts denied :

The insulted sire (his god's peculiar care)

To Phœbus prayed, and Phœbus heard the prayer :

A dreadful plague ensues ; the avenging darts

Incessant fly, and pierce the Grecian hearts.

A prophet then, inspired by heaven, arose,

And points the crime, and thence derives the woes ;

Myself the first the assembled chiefs incline

To avert the vengeance of the power divine ;

Then, rising in his wrath, the monarch stormed ;

Incensed he threatened, and his threats performed :
The fair Chryseïs to her sire was sent,
With offered gifts to make the god relent ;
But now he seized Briseïs' heavenly charms,
And of my valor's prize defrauds my arms,
Defrauds the votes of all the Grecian train ;
And service, faith, and justice plead in vain.
But, goddess ! thou thy suppliant son attend,
To high Olympus' shining court ascend,
Urge all the ties to former service owed,
And sue for vengeance to the thundering god.
Oft hast thou triumphed in the glorious boast
That thou stood'st forth of all the ethereal host,
When bold rebellion shook the realms above,
The undaunted guard of cloud-compelling Jove.
When the bright partner of his awful reign,
The warlike maid, and monarch of the main,
The traitor-gods, by mad ambition driven,
Durst threat with chains the omnipotence of heaven,
Then called by thee, the monster Titan came ;
(Whom gods Briareus, men Ægeon name ;)
Through wondering skies enormous stalked along ;
Not he that shakes the solid earth so strong :
With giant-pride at Jove's high throne he stands,
And brandished round him all his hundred hands.
The affrighted gods confessed their awful lord,
They dropped the fetters, trembled and adored.
This, goddess, this to his remembrance call,
Embrace his knees, at his tribunal fall ;
Conjure him far to drive the Grecian train,
To hurl them headlong to their fleet and main,
To heap the shores with copious dead, and bring

The Greeks to know the curse of such a king :
Let Agamemnon lift his haughty head
O'er all his wide dominion of the dead,
And mourn in blood that e'er he durst disgrace
The boldest warrior of the Grecian race."

" Unhappy son ! " (fair Thetis thus replies,
While tears celestial trickle from her eyes,)
" Why have I borne thee with a mother's throes,
To fates averse, and nursed for future woes ?
So short a space the light of heaven to view !
So short a space ! and filled with sorrow too !
O might a parent's careful wish prevail,
Far, far from Ilion should thy vessels sail,
And thou, from camps remote, the danger shun,
Which now, alas ! too nearly threatens my son.
Yet (what I can) to move thy suit I 'll go
To great Olympus crowned with fleecy snow.
Meantime, secure within thy ships, from far
Behold the field, nor mingle in the war.
The sire of gods, and all the ethereal train,
On the warm limits of the farthest main,
Now mix with mortals, nor disdain to grace
The feasts of Ethiopia's blameless race :
Twelve days the powers indulge the genial rite,
Returning with the twelfth revolving light.
Then will I mount the brazen dome and move
The high tribunal of immortal Jove."

The goddess spoke : the rolling waves unclose ;
Then down the deep she plunged, from whence she
rose,
And left him sorrowing on the lonely coast
In wild resentment for the fair he lost.

Alexander Pope.

ILIAD, III., 235-244.

HELEN ON THE WALLS OF TROY.

Helen, having pointed out to Priam the prominent Grecian chieftains in the plain below, thus continues : —

“ CLEARLY the rest I behold of the dark-eyed sons
of Achaia ;
Known to me well are the faces of all ; their names
I remember ;
Two, two only remain, whom I see not among the
commanders,
Castor fleet in the car, — Polydeukes brave with
the cestus, —
Own dear brethren of mine, — one parent loved us
as infants.
Are they not here in the host, from the shores of
loved Lacedæmon,
Or, though they came with the rest in ships that
bound through the waters,
Dare they not enter the fight or stand in the coun-
cil of Heroes,
All for fear of the shame and the taunts my crime
has awakened ? ”

So said she ; — they long since in Earth’s soft
arms were reposing,
There, in their own dear land, their Fatherland,
Lacedæmon.

E. C. Hawtrey.

ILIAD, IV., 422-456.

THE ADVANCE OF THE TWO ARMIES INTO
THE BATTLE.

As when the ocean-billows, surge on surge,
Are pushed along to the resounding shore
Before the western wind, and first a wave
Uplifts itself, and then against the land
Dashes and roars, and round the headland peaks
Tosses on high and spouts its spray afar,
So moved the serried phalanxes of Greece
To battle, rank succeeding rank, each chief
Giving command to his own troops ; the rest
Marched noiselessly ; you might have thought no
voice

Was in the breasts of all that mighty throng,
So silently they all obeyed their chiefs,
Their showy armor glittering as they moved
In firm array. But, as the numerous flock
Of some rich man, while the white milk is drawn
Within his sheepfold, hear the plaintive call
Of their own lambs, and bleat incessantly,
Such clamors from the mighty Trojan host
Arose ; nor was the war-cry one, nor one
The voice, but words of mingled languages,
For they were called from many different climes.
These Mars encouraged to the fight ; but those
The blue-eyed Pallas. Terror, too, was there,
And Fright, and Strife that rages unappeased, —
Sister and comrade of man-slaying Mars, —
Who rises small at first, but grows, and lifts

Her head to heaven and walks upon the earth.
She, striding through the crowd and heightening
The mutual rancor, flung into the midst
Contention, source of bale to all alike.

And now, when met the armies in the field,
The ox-hide shields encountered, and the spears,
And might of warriors mailed in brass; then
clashed

The bossy bucklers, and the battle-din
Was loud; then rose the mingled shouts and groans
Of those who slew and those who fell; the earth
Ran with their blood. As when the winter streams
Rush down the mountain-sides, and fill, below,
With their swift waters, poured from gushing
springs,

Some hollow vale, the shepherd on the heights
Hears the far roar, — such was the mingled din
That rose from the great armies when they met.

William Cullen Bryant.

ILIAD, VI., 369-502.

THE PARTING OF HECTOR AND ANDROMACHE.

HE said, and passed with sad presaging heart
To seek his spouse, his soul's far dearer part;
At home he sought her, but he sought in vain:
She, with one maid of all her menial train,
Had thence retired; and with her second joy,
The young Astyanax, the hope of Troy,
Pensive she stood on Ilion's towery height,
Beheld the war, and sickened at the sight:
There her sad eyes in vain her lord explore,
Or weep the wounds her bleeding country bore.

But he who found not whom his soul desired,
Whose virtue charmed him as her beauty fired,
Stood in the gates, and asked what way she bent
Her parting steps; if to the fane she went,
Where late the mourning matrons made resort;
Or sought her sisters in the Trojan court.
Not to the court (replied the attendant train),
Nor mixed with matrons to Minerva's fane:
To Ilion's steepy tower she bent her way,
To mark the fortunes of the doubtful day.
Troy fled, she heard, before the Grecian sword,
She heard and trembled for her absent lord:
Distracted with surprise, she seemed to fly,
Fear on her cheek, and sorrow in her eye.
The nurse attended with her infant boy,
The young Astyanax, the hope of Troy.

Hector, this heard, returned without delay;
Swift through the town he trod his former way,
Through streets of palaces, and walks of state;
And met the mourner at the Scæan gate.
With haste to meet him sprung the joyful fair,
His blameless wife, Eëtion's wealthy heir:
(Cilician Thebè great Eëtion swayed,
And Hippoplacus' wide extended shade;)
The nurse stood near, in whose embraces pressed
His only hope hung smiling at her breast,
Whom each soft charm and early grace adorn,
Fair as the new-born star that gilds the morn.
To this loved infant Hector gave the name
Scamandrius, from Scamander's honored stream;
Astyanax the Trojans called the boy,
From his great father, the defense of Troy.

Silent the warrior smiled, and pleased resigned
To tender passions all his mighty mind :
His beauteous princess cast a mournful look,
Hung on his hand, and then dejected spoke ;
Her bosom labored with a boding sigh,
And the big tear stood trembling in her eye.

“ Too daring prince ! ah, whither dost thou run ?
Ah, too forgetful of thy wife and son !
And think'st thou not how wretched we shall be,
A widow I, a helpless orphan he !
For sure such courage length of life denies ;
And thou must fall, thy virtue's sacrifice.
Greece in her single heroes strove in vain ;
Now hosts oppose thee, and thou must be slain !
Oh, grant me, Gods ! ere Hector meets his doom,
All I can ask of heaven, an early tomb !
So shall my days in one sad tenor run,
And end with sorrows as they first begun.
No parent now remains my griefs to share,
No father's aid, no mother's tender care.
The fierce Achilles wrapped our walls in fire,
Laid Thebè waste, and slew my warlike sire !
His fate compassion in the victor bred ;
Stern as he was, he yet revered the dead,
His radiant arms preserved from hostile spoil
And laid him decent on the funeral pile ;
Then raised a mountain where his bones were
burned ;
The mountain nymphs the rural tomb adorned,
Jove's sylvan daughters bade their elms bestow
A barren shade, and in his honor grow.
By the same arm my seven brave brothers fell ;

In one sad day beheld the gates of hell :
While the fat herds and snowy flocks they fed ;
Amid their fields the hapless heroes bled !
My mother lived to bear the victor's bands,
The queen of Hippoplacia's sylvan lands :
Redeemed too late, she scarce beheld again
Her pleasing empire and her native plain,
When ah ! oppressed by life-consuming woe,
She fell a victim to Diana's bow.

Yet, while my Hector still survives, I see
My father, mother, brethren, all, in thee :
Alas ! my parents, brothers, kindred, all
Once more will perish, if my Hector fall.
Thy wife, thy infant in thy danger share :
Oh, prove a husband's and a father's care !
That quarter most the skillful Greeks annoy,
Where yon wild fig-trees join the walls of Troy :
Thou from this tower defend the important post ;
There Agamemnon points his dreadful host,
That pass Tydides, Ajax, strive to gain,
And there the vengeful Spartan fires his train.
Thrice our bold foes the fierce attack have given,
Or led by hopes, or dictated from heaven.
Let others in the field their arms employ,
But stay my Hector here, and guard his Troy."

The chief replied : " That post shall be my care,
Not that alone, but all the works of war.
How would the sons of Troy, in arms renowned,
And Troy's proud dames, whose garments sweep
the ground,
Attaint the lustre of my former name,
Should Hector basely quit the field of fame ?

My early youth was bred to martial pains,
My soul impels me to the embattled plains :
Let me be foremost to defend the throne,
And guard my father's glories, and my own.

Yet come it will, the day decreed by fates :
(How my heart trembles while my tongue relates !)
The day when thou, imperial Troy ! must bend,
And see thy warriors fall, thy glories end.
And yet no dire presage so wounds my mind,
My mother's death, the ruin of my kind,
Not Priam's hoary hairs defiled with gore,
Not all my brothers gasping on the shore ;
As thine, Andromache ! thy griefs I dread ;
I see thee trembling, weeping, captive led !
In Argive looms our battles to design,
And woes, of which so large a part was thine !
To bear the victor's hard commands, or bring
The weight of waters from Hyperia's ¹ spring.
There, while you groan beneath the load of life,
They cry, Behold the mighty Hector's wife !
Some haughty Greek, who lives thy tears to see,
Embitters all thy woes, by naming me.
The thoughts of glory past, and present shame,
A thousand griefs shall waken at the name !
May I lie cold before that dreadful day,
Pressed with a load of monumental clay !
Thy Hector, wrapped in everlasting sleep,
Shall neither hear thee sigh, nor see thee weep."

Thus having spoke, the illustrious chief of Troy
Stretched his fond arms to clasp the lovely boy.
The babe clung crying to his nurse's breast,

¹ A fountain in Greece.

Scared at the dazzling helm and nodding crest.
With secret pleasure each fond parent smiled,
And Hector hasted to relieve his child,
The glittering terrors from his brows unbound,
And placed the beaming helmet on the ground ;
Then kissed the child, and, lifting high in air
Thus to the gods preferred a father's prayer :

“ O thou ! whose glory fills the ethereal throne,
And all ye deathless powers ! protect my son !
Grant him, like me, to purchase just renown,
To guard the Trojans, to defend the crown,
Against his country's foes the war to wage,
And rise the Hector of the future age !
So when triumphant from successful toils
Of heroes slain he bears the reeking spoils,
Whole hosts may hail him with deserved acclaim,
And say, This chief transcends his father's fame :
While pleased, amidst the general shouts of Troy,
His mother's conscious heart o'erflows with joy.”

He spoke, and fondly gazing on her charms,
Restored the pleasing burden to her arms ;
Soft on her fragrant breast the babe she laid,
Hushed to repose, and with a smile surveyed.
The troubled pleasure soon chastised by fear,
She mingled with a smile a tender tear.
The softened chief with kind compassion viewed,
And dried the falling drops, and thus pursued :

“ Andromache ! my soul's far better part,
Why with untimely sorrows heaves thy heart ?
No hostile hand can antedate my doom,
Till fate condemns me to the silent tomb.
Fixed is the term to all the race of earth ;

And such the hard condition of our birth,
No force can then resist, no flight can save ;
All sink alike, the fearful and the brave.
No more — but hasten to thy tasks at home,
There guide the spindle, and direct the loom :
Me glory summons to the martial scene,
The field of combat is the sphere for men.
Where heroes war, the foremost place I claim,
The first in danger, as the first in fame.”

Thus having said, the glorious chief resumes
His towery helmet, black with shading plumes.
His princess parts with a prophetic sigh,
Unwilling parts, and oft reverts her eye,
That streamed at every look : then, moving slow,
Sought her own palace, and indulged her woe.
There, while her tears deplored the godlike man,
Through all her train the soft infection ran,
The pious maids their mingled sorrows shed,
And mourn the living Hector, as the dead.

Pope.

ILIAD, VIII., 542-565.

THE TROJAN CAMP AT NIGHT.

So Hector said, and sea-like roared his host ;
Then loosed their sweating horses from the yoke,
And each beside his chariot bound his own ;
And oxen from the city, and goodly sheep
In haste they drove, and honey-hearted wine
And bread from out the houses brought, and heaped
Their firewood, and the winds from off the plain
Rolled the rich vapor far into the heaven.

And these all night upon the bridge of war
 Sat glorying ; many a fire before them blazed :
 As when in heaven the stars about the moon
 Look beautiful, when all the winds are laid,
 And every height comes out, and jutting peak
 And valley, and the immeasurable heavens
 Break open to their highest, and all the stars
 Shine, and the Shepherd gladdens in his heart :
 So many a fire between the ships and stream
 Of Xanthus blazed before the towers of Troy,
 A thousand on the plain ; and close by each
 Sat fifty in the blaze of burning fire :
 And champing golden grain the horses stood
 Hard by their chariots, waiting for the dawn.

Lord Tennyson.

ILIAD, IX., 374-426.

ACHILLES REFUSES THE GIFTS OF AGAMEMNON.

I NEVER will partake his works, nor counsels, as
 before ;
 He once deceived and injured me, and he shall
 never more
 Tye my affections with his words. Enough is the
 increase
 Of one success in his deceits ; which let him joy in
 peace,
 And bear it to a wretched end. Wise Jove hath
 reft his brain
 To bring him plagues, and these his gifts I as my
 foes, disdain.
 Even in the numbness of calm death I will revenge-
 ful be,

Though ten or twenty times so much he would bestow on me,
All he hath here, or anywhere, or Orchomen contains,
To which men bring their wealth for strength ; or
all the store remains
In circuit of Egyptian Thebes, where much hid treasure lies,
Whose walls contain an hundred ports, of so admired a size,
Two hundred soldiers may a-front with horse and chariots pass.
Nor, would he amplify all his like sand, or dust, or grass,
Should he reclaim me, till his wreak paid me for all the pains
That with his contumely burned, like poison, in my veins.
Nor shall his daughter be my wife, although she might contend
With golden Venus for her form ; or if she did transcend
Blue-eyed Minerva for her works ; let him a Greek select
Fit for her, and a greater king. For if the gods protect
My safety to my father's court, he shall choose me a wife.
Many fair Achive princesses of unimpeachèd life
In Helle and in Phthia live, whose sires do cities hold,
Of whom I can have whom I will. And, more an hundredfold

My true mind in my country likes to take a lawful
wife

Than in another nation ; and there delight my life
With those goods that my father got, much rather
than die here.

Not all the wealth of well-built Troy, possessed,
when peace was there,

All that Apollo's marble fane in stony Pythos holds,
I value equal with the life that my free breast en-
folds.

Sheep, oxen, tripods, crest-decked horse, though
lost, may come again,

But when the white guard of our teeth no longer
can contain

Our human soul, away it flies, and, once gone,
never more

To her frail mansion any man can her lost powers
restore.

And therefore since my mother-queen, famed for
her silver feet,

Told me two fates about my death in my direction
meet ;

The one, that, if I here remain t' assist our victory,
My safe return shall never live, my fame shall
never die ;

If my return obtain success, much of my fame
decays,

But death shall linger his approach, and I live
many days.

This being revealed, 't were foolish pride t'abridge
my life for praise.

Then with myself I will advise others to hoise their
sail,

For 'gainst the height of Ilion you never shall prevail:
Jove with his hand protecteth it, and makes the soldiers bold.
This tell the King in every part, for so grave legates should,
That they may better counsels use, to save their fleet and friends
By their own valors; since this course, drowned in my anger, ends.

George Chapman.

ILIAD, XII., 265-330.

THE VALOR OF THE AJACES. SARPEDON AND GLAUCUS.

THE Greeks yet stood, and still repaired the fore-fights of their wall
With hides of oxen, and from thence they poured down stones in showers
Upon the underminers' heads. Within the foremost towers
Both the Ajaces had command, who answered every part,
The assaulters and their soldiers repressed, and put in heart;
Repairing valor as their wall; spake some fair, some reproved,
Whoever made not good his place; and thus they all sorts moved:
"O countrymen, now need in aid would have excess be spent,

The excellent must be admired, the meanest excellent,
The worst do well. In changing war all should not
be alike,
Nor any idle; which to know fits all, lest Hector
strike
Your minds with frights, as ears with threats. Forward
be all your hands,
Urge one another. This doubt down, that now betwixt
us stands,
Jove will go with us to their walls." To this effect
aloud
Spake both the princes; and as high, with this, the
expulsion flowed.
And as in winter time when Jove his cold, sharp
javelins throws
Amongst us mortals; and is moved to white earth
with his snows;
The winds asleep, he freely pours, till highest prominents,
Hilltops, low meadows, and the fields that crown
with most contents
The toils of men, seaports, and shores, are hid,
and every place
But floods, that snow's fair, tender flakes, as their
own brood, embrace;
So both sides covered earth with stones, so both for
life contend,
To show their sharpness; through the wall uproar
stood up an end.
Nor had great Hector and his friends the rampire
overrun,

If heaven's great Counselor, high Jove, had not
 inflamed his son
Sarpedon (like the forest's king when he on oxen
 flies)
Against the Grecians; his round targe he to his
 arm applies,
Brass-leaved without, and all within thick ox-hides
 quilted hard,
The verge nailed round with rods of gold; and,
 with two darts prepared,
He leads his people. As ye see a mountain lion
 fare,
Long kept from prey, in forcing which, his high
 mind makes him dare
Assault upon the whole full fold, though guarded
 never so
With well-armed men, and eager dogs; away he
 will not go,
But venture on and either snatch a prey, or be a
 prey;
So fared divine Sarpedon's mind, resolved to force
 his way
Through all the forefights and the wall; yet since
 he did not see
Others as great as he in name, as great in mind as
 he,
He spake to Glaucus; "Glaucus, say, why are we
 honored more
Than other men of Lycia, in place; with greater
 store
Of meats and cups; with goodlier roofs; delight-
 some gardens; walks;

More lands and better ; so much wealth, that court
and country talks

Of us and our possessions, and every way we go,
Gaze on us as we were their gods ? This where we
dwell is so ;

The shores of Xanthus ring of this ; and shall we
not exceed

As much in merit as in noise ? Come, be we great
in deed

As well as look ; shine not in gold, but in the
flames of fight ;

That so our neat-armed Lycians may say : ‘ See,
these are right

Our kings, our rulers ; these deserve to eat and
drink the best ;

These govern not ingloriously ; these, thus exceed
the rest,

Do more than they command to do.’ O friend, if
keeping back

Would keep back age from us and death, and that
we might not wrack

In this life’s human sea at all, but that deferring
now

We shunned death ever, nor would I half this vain
valor show,

Nor glorify a folly so, to wish thee to advance ;

But since we must go, though not here ; and that,
besides the chance

Proposed now, there are infinite fates of other sorts
in death,

Which neither to be fled nor ’scaped, a man must
sink beneath ;

Come, try we if this sort be ours, and either render
thus
Glory to others, or make them resign the like
to us."

This motion Glaucus shifted not, but without
words obeyed.
Foreright went both, a mighty troop of Lycians
followed.

Chapman.

ILIAD, XVI., 638-683.

THE DEAD SARPEDON BORNE BY SLEEP AND
DEATH TO HIS NATIVE LYCIA.

Now great Sarpedon on the sandy shore,
His heavenly form defaced with dust and gore,
And stuck with darts by warring heroes shed,
Lies undistinguished from the vulgar dead.
His long-disputed corse the chiefs enclose,
On every side the busy combat grows ;
Thick as beneath some shepherd's thatched abode,
(The pails high foaming with a milky flood,)
The buzzing flies, a persevering train,
Incessant swarm, and chased, return again.

Jove viewed the combat with a stern survey,
And eyes that flashed intolerable day.
Fixed on the field his sight, his breast debates
The vengeance due, and meditates the fates :
Whether to urge their prompt effect, and call
The force of Hector to Patroclus' fall,
This instant see his short-lived trophies won,
And stretch him breathless on his slaughtered son ;

Or yet, with many a soul's untimely flight,
Augment the fame and horror of the fight.
To crown Achilles' valiant friend with praise
At length he dooms ; and that his last of days
Shall set in glory ; bids him drive the foe ;
Nor unattended see the shades below.

Then Hector's mind he fills with dire dismay ;
He mounts his car, and calls his hosts away.
Sunk with Troy's heavy fates, he sees decline
The scales of Jove, and pants with awe divine.

Then, nor before, the hardy Lycians fled,
And left their monarch with the common dead.
Around, in heaps on heaps, a dreadful wall
Of carnage rises, as the heroes fall.
(So Jove decreed !) At length the Greeks obtain
The prize contested, and despoil the slain.
The radiant arms are by Patroclus borne,
Patroclus' ships the glorious spoils adorn.

Then thus to Phœbus, in the realms above,
Spoke from his throne the cloud-compelling Jove ;
" Descend, my Phœbus ! on the Phrygian plain,
And from the fight convey Sarpedon slain ;
Then bathe his body in the crystal flood ;
With dust dishonored, and deformed with blood ;
O'er all his limbs ambrosial odors shed,
And with celestial robes adorn the dead.
Those rites discharged, his sacred corse bequeath
To the soft arms of silent Sleep and Death.
They to his friends the mournful charge shall bear ;
His friends a tomb and pyramid shall rear ;
What honors mortals after death receive,
Those unavailing honors we may give ! "

Apollo bows, and from mount Ida's height,
Swift to the field precipitates his flight ;
Thence from the war the breathless hero bore,
Veiled in a cloud, to silver Simois' shore ;
There bathed his honorable wounds, and dressed
His manly members in the immortal vest ;
And with perfumes of sweet ambrosial dews,
Restores his freshness, and his form renews.
Then Sleep and Death, two twins of wingèd race,
Of matchless swiftness, but of silent pace,
Received Sarpedon, at the god's command,
And in a moment reached the Lycian land ;
The corse amidst his weeping friends they laid,
Where endless honors wait the sacred shade.

Pope.

ILIAD, XVII., 426-468.

ACHILLES' HORSES WEEP FOR PATROCLUS.

MEANTIME, at distance from the scene of blood,
The pensive steeds of great Achilles stood ;
Their godlike master ¹ slain before their eyes,
They wept, and shared in human miseries.
In vain Automedon now shakes the rein,
Now plies the lash, and soothes and threats in vain ;
Nor to the fight, nor Hellespont they go ;
Restive they stood, and obstinate in woe :
Still as a tombstone, never to be moved,
On some good man or woman unproved,
Lays its eternal weight ; or fixed as stands
A marble courser by the sculptor's hands,

¹ Patroclus, to whom Achilles had lent his horses.

Placed on the hero's grave. Along their face
The big round drops coursed down with silent pace
Conglobing on the dust. Their manes, that late
Circled their archèd necks, and waved in state,
Trailed on the dust beneath the yoke were spread,
And prone to earth was hung their languid head :
Nor Jove disdained to cast a pitying look,
While thus relenting to the steeds he spoke :

“Unhappy coursers of immortal strain !
Exempt from age, and deathless now in vain ;
Did we your race on mortal man bestow,
Only, alas ! to share in mortal woe ?
For ah ! what is there of inferior birth,
That breathes or creeps upon the dust of earth ;
What wretched creature of what wretched kind,
Than man more weak, calamitous, and blind ?
A miserable race ! but cease to mourn :
For not by you shall Priam's son be borne
High on the splendid car : one glorious prize
He rashly boasts ; the rest our will denies.
Ourself will swiftmess to your nerves impart,
Ourself with rising spirits swell your heart.
Automedon your rapid flight shall bear
Safe to the navy through the storm of war.
For yet 't is given to Troy, to ravage o'er
The field, and spread her slaughters to the shore ;
The sun shall see her conquer, till his fall
With sacred darkness shades the face of all.”

He said ; and breathing in the immortal horse
Excessive spirit, urged them to the course ;
From their high manes they shake the dust, and
bear

The kindling chariot through the parted war.
 So flies a vulture through the clamorous train
 Of geese, that scream, and scatter round the plain.
 From danger now with swiftest speed they flew,
 And now to conquest with like speed pursue ;
 Sole in the seat the charioteer remains,
 Now plies the javelin, now directs the reins.

Pope.

ILLIAD, XIX., 276-424.

THE RETURN OF ACHILLES TO THE WAR.

Briseïs mourns the Death of Patroclus.

THE speedy council at his word adjourned :
 To their black vessels all the Greeks returned.
 Achilles sought his tent. His train before
 Marched onward, bending with the gifts they bore.
 Those in the tents the squires industrious spread ;
 The foaming coursers to the stalls they led ;
 To their new seats the female captives move :
 Briseïs, radiant as the Queen of Love,
 Slow as she passed, beheld with sad survey
 Where, gashed with cruel wounds, Patroclus lay.
 Prone on the body fell the heavenly fair,
 Beat her sad breast, and tore her golden hair ;
 All beautiful in grief, her humid eyes
 Shining with tears, she lifts, and thus she cries :
 “ Ah, youth forever dear, forever kind,
 Once tender friend of my distracted mind !
 I left thee fresh in life, in beauty gay !
 Now find thee cold, inanimated clay !
 What woes my wretched race of life attend !

Sorrows on sorrows, never doomed to end !
The first loved consort of my virgin-bed
Before these eyes in fatal battle bled !
My three brave brothers in one mournful day,
All trod the dark, irremeable way :
Thy friendly hand upreared me from the plain,
And dried my sorrows for a husband slain ;
Achilles' care you promised I should prove,
The first, the dearest partner of his love ;
That rites divine should ratify the band,
And make me empress in his native land.
Accept these grateful tears ! for thee they flow,
For thee, that ever felt another's woe ! ”

Her sister captives echoed groan for groan,
Nor mourned Patroclus' fortunes, but their own.
The leaders pressed the chief on every side ;
Unmoved he heard them, and with sighs denied.

“ If yet Achilles have a friend, whose care
Is bent to please him, this request forbear ;
Till yonder sun descend, ah ! let me pay
To grief and anguish one abstemious day.”

He spoke, and from the warriors turned his face :
Yet still the brother-kings of Atreus' race,
Nestor, Idomeneus, Ulysses sage,
And Phoenix, strive to calm his grief and rage,
His rage they calm not, nor his grief control ;
He groans, he raves, he sorrows from his soul.

“ Thou too, Patroclus ! ” (thus his heart he vents)
“ Once spread the inviting banquet in our tents :
Thy sweet society, thy winning care,
Once stayed Achilles, rushing to the war.
But now, alas ! to death's cold arms resigned,

What banquet but revenge can glad my mind ?
What greater sorrow could afflict my breast,
What more, if hoary Peleus were deceased ?
Who now, perhaps, in Phthia dreads to hear
His son's sad fate, and drops a tender tear.
What more, should Neoptolemus the brave
(My only offspring) sink into the grave ?
If yet that offspring lives ; (I distant far,
Of all neglectful, wage a hateful war.)
I could not this, this cruel stroke attend ;
Fate claimed Achilles, but might spare his friend.
I hoped Patroclus might survive, to rear
My tender orphan with a parent's care.
From Scyros' isle conduct him o'er the main,
And glad his eyes with his paternal reign,
The lofty palace, and the large domain.
For Peleus breathes no more the vital air ;
Or drags a wretched life of age and care,
But till the news of my sad fate invades
His hastening soul, and sinks him to the shades."

Sighing he said : his grief the heroes joined,
Each stole a tear for what he left behind.
Their mingled grief the sire of heaven surveyed,
And thus with pity to his blue-eyed maid : ¹

"Is then Achilles now no more thy care,
And dost thou thus desert the great in war ?
Lo, where yon sails their canvas wings extend,
All comfortless he sits, and wails his friend :
Ere thirst and want his forces have oppressed,
Haste and infuse ambrosia in his breast."

He spoke, and sudden at the word of Jove

¹ Minerva (Athene).

Shot the descending goddess from above.
So swift through ether the shrill Harpy springs,
The wide air floating to her ample wings.
To great Achilles she her flight addressed,
And poured divine ambrosia in his breast,
With nectar sweet, (refection of the gods!)
Then, swift ascending, sought the bright abodes.

Now issued from the ships the warrior train,
And like a deluge poured upon the plain.
As when the piercing blasts of Boreas blow,
And scatter o'er the fields the driving snow ;
From dusky clouds the fleecy winter flies,
Whose dazzling lustre whitens all the skies :
So helms succeeding helms, so shields from shields
Catch the quick beams, and brighten all the fields ;
Broad glittering breastplates, spears with pointed
rays,
Mix in one stream, reflecting blaze on blaze :
Thick beats the centre as the coursers bound,
With splendor flame the skies, and laugh the fields
around.

Full in the midst, high-towering o'er the rest,
His limbs in arms divine Achilles dressed ;
Arms which the father of the fire bestowed,
Forged on the eternal anvils of the god.
Grief and revenge his furious heart inspire,
His glowing eyeballs roll with living fire ;
He grinds his teeth, and furious with delay
O'erlooks the embattled host, and hopes the bloody
day.

The silver cuishes first his thighs infold ;
Then o'er his breast was braced the hollow gold :

The brazen sword a various baldric tied,
That, starred with gems, hung glittering at his
side ;

And, like the moon, the broad refulgent shield
Blazed with long rays, and gleamed athwart the
field.

So to night-wandering sailors, pale with fears,
Wide o'er the watery waste a light appears,
Which on the far-seen mountain blazing high,
Streams from some lonely watch-tower to the sky :
With mournful eyes they gaze and gaze again ;
Loud howls the storm and drives them o'er the
main.

Next, his high head the helmet graced ; behind
The sweepy crest hung floating in the wind :
Like the red star, that from his flaming hair
Shakes down diseases, pestilence, and war ;
So streamed the golden honors from his head,
Trembled the sparkling plumes, and the loose glo-
ries shed.

The chief beholds himself with wondering eyes ;
His arms he poises, and his motions tries ;
Buoyed by some inward force, he seems to swim,
And feels a pinion lifting every limb.

And now he shakes his great paternal spear,
Ponderous and huge ! which not a Greek could
rear :

From Pelion's cloudy top an ash entire
Old Chiron felled, and shaped it for his sire ;
A spear which stern Achilles only wields,
The death of heroes, and the dread of fields.

*As Achilles is about to enter the battle, Xanthus,
his Horse, addresses him.*

Automedon and Alcimus prepare
The immortal coursers and the radiant car ;
(The silver traces sweeping at their side ;)
Their fiery mouths resplendent bridles tied ;
The ivory-studded reins, returned behind,
Waved o'er their backs, and to the chariot joined.
The charioteer then whirled the lash around,
And swift ascended at one active bound.
All bright in heavenly arms, above his squire,
Achilles mounts, and sets the field on fire ;
Not brighter Phœbus in the ethereal way,
Flames from his chariot, and restores the day.
High o'er the host all terrible he stands,
And thunders to his steeds these dread commands :
“ Xanthus and Balius ! of Podarges' strain,
(Unless ye boast that heavenly race in vain)
Be swift, be mindful of the load ye bear,
And learn to make your master more your care.
Through falling squadrons bear my slaughtering
sword,
Nor, as ye left Patroclus,¹ leave your lord.”
The generous Xanthus, as the words he said,
Seemed sensible of woe, and drooped his head :
Trembling he stood before the golden wain,
And bowed to dust the honors of his mane,
When, strange to tell ! (so Juno willed) he broke
Eternal silence, and portentous spoke :

¹ Achilles had lent his horses to Patroclus, and the latter had been slain in the fight.

“ Achilles ! yes ! this day at least we bear,
Thy rage in safety through the files of war :
But come it will, the fatal time must come,
Nor ours the fault, but God decrees thy doom.
Not through our crime, or slowness in the course,
Fell thy Patroclus, but by heavenly force ;
The bright far-shooting god who gilds the day,
(Confessed we saw him) tore his arms away.
No : — could our swiftness o’er the winds prevail,
Or beat the pinions of the western gale,
All were in vain : the Fates thy death demand,
Due to a mortal and immortal hand.”

Then ceased forever, by the Furies tied,
His fateful voice. The intrepid chief replied
With unabated rage : “ So let it be !
Portents and prodigies are lost on me.
I know my fates : to die, to see no more
My much loved parents, and my native shore —
Enough — when heaven ordains I sink in night ;
Now perish Troy ! ” he said, and rushed to fight.
Pope.

ILIAD, XXII., 248-515.

THE DEATH OF HECTOR.

The Meeting and the Contest.

Now when the advancing chiefs stood face to face,
The crested hero, Hector, thus began :

“ No longer I avoid thee as of late,
O son of Peleus ! Thrice around the walls
Of Priam’s mighty city have I fled,

Nor dared to wait thy coming. Now my heart
Bids me encounter thee ; my time is come
To slay or to be slain. Now let us call
The gods to witness, who attest and guard
The covenants of men. Should Jove bestow
On me the victory, and I take thy life,
Thou shalt meet no dishonor at my hands ;
But, stripping off the armor, I will send
The Greeks thy body. Do the like by me."

The swift Achilles answered with a frown :
" Accursèd Hector, never talk to me
Of covenants. Men and lions plight no faith,
Nor wolves agree with lambs, but each must plan
Evil against the other. So between
Thyself and me no compact can exist,
Or understood intent. First, one of us
Must fall and yield his life-blood to the god
Of battles. Summon all thy valor now.
A skillful spearman thou hast need to be,
And a bold warrior. There is no escape,
For now doth Pallas doom thee to be slain
By my good spear. Thou shalt repay to me
The evil thou hast done my countrymen, —
My friends whom thou hast slaughtered in thy
rage."

He spake, and, brandishing his massive spear,
Hurled it at Hector, who beheld its aim
From where he stood. He stooped, and over him
The brazen weapon passed, and plunged to earth.
Unseen by royal Hector, Pallas went
And plucked it from the ground, and brought it
back

And gave it to the hands of Peleus' son,
While Hector said to his illustrious foe :

“ Godlike Achilles, thou hast missed thy mark ;
Nor hast thou learned my doom from Jupiter,
As thou pretendest. Thou art glib of tongue,
And cunningly thou orderest thy speech,
In hope that I who hear thee may forget
My might and valor. Think not I shall flee,
That thou mayst pierce my back : for thou shalt
send

Thy spear, if God permit thee, through my breast
As I rush on thee. Now avoid in turn
My brazen weapon. Would that it might pass
Clean through thee, all its length ! The tasks of
war

For us of Troy were lighter for thy death,
Thou pest and deadly foe of all our race ! ”

He spake, and brandishing his massive spear,
Hurled it, nor missed, but in the centre smote
The buckler of Pelides. Far away
It bounded from the brass, and he was vexed
To see that the swift weapon from his hand
Had flown in vain. He stood perplexed and sad ;
No second spear had he. He called aloud
On the white-bucklered chief, Deiphobus,
To bring another ; but that chief was far,
And Hector saw that it was so and said : —

“ Ah me ! the gods have summoned me to die.
I thought my warrior-friend, Deiphobus,
Was by my side ; but he is still in Troy,
And Pallas has deceived me. Now my death
Cannot be far, — is near ; there is no hope

Of my escape, for so it pleases Jove
And Jove's great archer-son, who have till now
Delivered me. My hour at last is come ;
Yet not ingloriously or passively
I die, but first will do some valiant deed,
Of which mankind shall hear in after time."

He spake, and drew the keen-edged sword that
hung,

Massive and finely tempered, at his side,
And sprang — as when an eagle high in heaven,
Through the thick cloud, darts downward to the
plain

To clutch some tender lamb or timid hare,
So Hector, brandishing that keen-edged sword,
Sprang forward, while Achilles opposite
Leaped toward him, all on fire with savage hate,
And holding his bright buckler, nobly wrought,
Before him. On his shining helmet waved
The fourfold crest ; there tossed the golden tufts
With which the hand of Vulcan lavishly
Had decked it. As in the still hours of night
Hesper goes forth among the host of stars,
The fairest light of heaven, so brightly shone,
Brandished in the right hand of Peleus' son,
The spear's keen blade, as, confident to slay
The noble Hector, o'er his glorious form
His quick eye ran, exploring where to plant
The surest wound. The glittering mail of brass
Won from the slain Patroclus guarded well
Each part, save only where the collar-bones
Divide the shoulder from the neck, and there
Appeared the throat, the spot where life is most

In peril. Through that part the noble son
Of Peleus drave his spear ; it went quite through
The tender neck, and yet the brazen blade
Cleft not the windpipe, and the power to speak
Remained. The Trojan fell amid the dust,
And thus Achilles boasted o'er his fall :

“ Hector, when from the slain Patroclus thou
: Didst strip his armor, little didst thou think
Of danger. Thou hadst then no fear of me,
Who was not near thee to avenge his death.
Fool ! there was left within the roomy ships
A mightier one than he, who should come forth,
The avenger of his blood, to take thy life.
Foul dogs and birds of prey shall tear thy flesh ;
The Greeks shall honor him with funeral rites.”

And then the crested Hector faintly said :
“ I pray thee by thy life, and by thy knees,
And by thy parents, suffer not the dogs
To tear me at the galleys of the Greeks.
Accept abundant store of brass and gold,
Which gladly will my father and the queen,
My mother, give in ransom. Send to them
My body, that the warriors and the dames
Of Troy may light for me the funeral pile.”

The swift Achilles answered with a frown :
“ Nay, by my knees entreat me not, thou cur,
Nor by my parents. I could even wish
My fury prompted me to cut thy flesh
In fragments, and devour it, such the wrong
That I have had from thee. There will be none
To drive away the dogs about thy head,
Not though thy Trojan friends should bring to me

Tenfold and twentyfold the offered gifts,
And promise others, — not though Priam, sprung
From Dardanus, should send thy weight in gold.
Thy mother shall not lay thee on thy bier,
To sorrow over thee whom she brought forth ;
But dogs and birds of prey shall mangle thee.”

And then the crested Hector, dying, said :
“ I know thee and too clearly I foresaw
I should not move thee, for thou hast a heart
Of iron. Yet reflect that for my sake
The anger of the gods may fall on thee,
When Paris and Apollo strike thee down,
Strong as thou art, before the Scæan gates.”

Thus Hector spake, and straightway o’er him
closed

The night of death ; the soul forsook his limbs,
And flew to Hades, grieving for its fate,
So soon divorced from youth and youthful might.
Then said the great Achilles to the dead :

“ Die thou ; and I, whenever it shall please
Jove and the other gods, will meet my fate.”

He spake, and, plucking forth his brazen lance,
He laid it by, and from the body stripped
The bloody mail. The thronging Greeks beheld
With wonder Hector’s tall and stately form,
And no one came who did not add a wound ;
And, looking to each other, thus they said :

“ How much more tamely Hector now endures
Our touch than when he set the fleet on fire ! ”

Such were the words of those who smote the
dead.

But now, when swift Achilles from the corpse

Had stripped the armor, he stood forth among
The Achaian host, and spake these wingèd words :

“ Leaders and princes of the Grecian host !
Since we, my friends, by favor of the gods,
Have overcome the chief who wrought more harm
To us than all the rest, let us assault
The town, and learn what they of Troy intend ; —
Whether their troops will leave the citadel
Since he is slain, or hold it with strong hand,
Though Hector is no more. But why give thought
To plans like these while yet Patroclus lies
A corpse unwept, unburied, at the fleet ?
I never will forget him while I live
And while these limbs have motion. Though be-
low

In Hades they forget the dead, yet I
Will there remember my beloved friend.
Now then, ye youths of Greece, move on and chant
A pæan, while returning to the fleet,
We bring great glory with us ; we have slain
The noble Hector, whom, throughout their town,
The Trojans ever worshiped like a god.”
He spake, and, planning in his mind to treat
The noble Hector shamefully, he bored
The sinews of his feet between the heel
And ankle ; drawing through them leathern thongs
He bound them to the car, but left the head
To trail in dust. And then he climbed the car,
Took in the shining mail, and lashed to speed
The coursers. Not unwillingly they flew.
Around the dead, as he was dragged along,
The dust arose ; his dark locks swept the ground.

That head, of late so noble in men's eyes,
Lay deep amid the dust, for Jove that day
Suffered the foes of Hector to insult
His corse in his own land.

Grief of Hecuba and Priam.

His mother saw,
And tore her hair, and flung her lustrous veil
Away, and uttered piercing shrieks. No less
His father, who so loved him, piteously
Bewailed him ; and in all the streets of Troy
The people wept aloud, with such lament
As if the towery Ilium were in flames
Even to its loftiest roofs. They scarce could keep
The aged king within, who, wild with grief,
Struggled to rush through the Dardanian gates,
And, rolling in the dust, entreated all
Who stood around him, calling them by name :

“ Refrain, my friends, though kind be your intent.

Let me go forth alone, and at the fleet
Of Greece will I entreat this man of blood
And violence. He may perchance be moved
With reverence for my age, and pity me
In my gray hairs ; for such a one as I
Is Peleus, his own father, by whose care
This Greek was reared to be a scourge to Troy,
And, more than all, a cause of grief to me,
So many sons of mine in life's fresh prime
Have fallen by his hand. I mourn for them,
But not with such keen anguish as I mourn
For Hector. Sorrow for his death will bring

My soul to Hades. Would that he had died
Here in my arms ! this solace had been ours, —
His most unhappy mother and myself
Had stooped to shed these tears upon his bier.”

He spake, and wept, and all the citizens
Wept with him. Hecuba among the dames
Took up the lamentation, and began : —

“ Why do I live, my son, when thou art dead,
And I so wretched ? — thou who wert my boast
Ever, by night and day, where’er I went.
And whom the Trojan men and matrons called
Their bulwark, honoring thee as if thou wert
A god. They glory in thy might no more,
Since fate and death have overtaken thee.”
Weeping she spake.

Andromache hears of Hector’s Death.

Meantime Andromache

Had heard no tidings of her husband yet.
No messenger had even come to say
That he was still without the gates. She sat
In a recess of those magnificent halls,
And wove a twofold web of brilliant hues,
On which were scattered flowers of rare device ;
And she had given her bright-haired maidens
charge

To place an ample caldron on the fire,
That Hector, coming from the battlefield,
Might find the warm bath ready. Thoughtless one !
She knew not that the blue-eyed archer-queen,
Far from the bath prepared for him, had slain
Her husband by the hand of Peleus’ son.

She heard the shrieks, the wail upon the tower,
Trembled in every limb, and quickly dropped
The shuttle, saying to her bright-haired maids :

“ Come with me, two of you, that I may learn
What now has happened. ’T is my mother’s voice
That I have heard. My heart leaps to my mouth ;
My limbs fail under me. Some deadly harm
Hangs over Priam’s sons ; far be the hour
When I shall hear of it. And yet I fear
Lest that Achilles, having got between
The daring Hector and the city gates,
May drive him to the plain alone, and quell
The desperate valor that was ever his ;
For never would he keep the ranks, but ranged
Beyond them, and gave way to no man’s might.”

She spake, and from the royal mansion rushed
Distractedly, and with a beating heart.
Her maids went with her. When she reached the
tower

And throng of men, and, standing on the wall,
Looked forth, she saw her husband dragged away
Before the city. Toward the Grecian fleet
The swift steeds drew him. Sudden darkness came
Over her eyes, and in a breathless swoon
She sank away and fell. The ornaments
Dropped from her brow, — the wreath, the woven
band,

The net, the veil which golden Venus gave
That day when crested Hector wedded her,
Dowered with large gifts, and led her from her
home,
Eëtion’s palace. Round her in a throng

Her sisters of the house of Priam pressed,
And gently raised her in that deathlike swoon.
But when she breathed again, and to its seat
The conscious mind returned, as in their arms
She lay, with sobs and broken speech she said :

“ Hector, — O wretched me ! — we both were
born

To sorrow ; thou at Troy, in Priam’s house,
And I at Thebè in Eëtion’s halls,
By woody Placos. From a little child
He reared me there, — unhappy he, and I
Unhappy ! O that I had ne’er been born !
Thou goest down to Hades and the depths
Of earth, and leavest me in thine abode,
Widowed, and never to be comforted.
Thy son, a speechless babe, to whom we two
Gave being, — hapless parents ! cannot have
Thy loving guardianship now thou art dead,
Nor be a joy to thee. Though he survive
The cruel warfare which the sons of Greece
Are waging, hard and evil yet will be
His lot hereafter ; others will remove
His landmarks and will make his fields their own.
The day in which a boy is fatherless
Makes him companionless ; with downcast eyes
He wanders, and his cheeks are stained with tears.
Unfed he goes where sit his father’s friends,
And plucks one by the cloak, and by the robe
Another. One who pities him shall give
A scanty draught, which only wets his lips,
But not his palate ; while another boy,
Whose parents both are living, thrusts him thence

With blows and vulgar clamor: 'Get thee gone!
Thy father is not with us at the feast.'
Then to his widowed mother shall return
Astyanax in tears, who not long since
Was fed, while sitting in his father's lap,
On marrow and the delicate fat of lambs.
And ever when his childish sports had tired
The boy, and sleep came stealing over him,
He slumbered, softly cushioned, on a couch
And in his nurse's arms, his heart at ease
And satiate with delights. But now thy son
Astyanax, — whom so the Trojans name
Because thy valor guarded gate and tower, —
Thy care withdrawn, shall suffer many things.
While far from those who gave thee birth, beside
The roomy ships of Greece, the restless worms
Shall make thy flesh their banquet when the dogs
Have gorged themselves. Thy garments yet re-
main

Within the palace, delicately wrought
And graceful, woven by the women's hands;
And these, since thou shalt put them on no more,
Nor wear them in thy death, I burn with fire
Before the Trojan men and dames; and all
Shall see how gloriously thou wert arrayed."

Weeping she spake, and with her wept her maids.

Bryant.

ILIAD, XXIV., 468-598.

PRIAM BEGS FROM ACHILLES THE BODY OF
HIS SON HECTOR.

So saying, Hermes swiftly sought again
The Olympian heights. Then Priam, to the ground
Alighting, left Idæus charged to watch
The steeds and mules, while right toward the tent,
Achilles' residence, himself advanced.
Him there he found, and sitting found apart
His fellow-warriors, of whom two alone,
Automedon and Alcimus the brave
Attended his commands ; he had himself
Supped newly, and the board stood unremoved.
Unseen of all huge Priam entered, stood
Before Achilles, clasped his knees and kissed
Those terrible and homicidal hands,
Which had destroyed so many of his sons.
As when a fugitive for blood the house
Of some chief enters in a foreign land,
All gaze, astonished at the sudden guest,
So gazed Achilles seeing Priam there,
And so stood all astonished, each his eyes
In silence fastening on his fellow's face.
But Priam kneeled, and suppliant thus began :
 " Think, O Achilles, semblance of the gods !
On thy own father full of days like me,
And trembling on the gloomy verge of life.
Some neighbor chief, it may be, even now
Oppresses him, and there is none at hand,
No friend to succor him in his distress.

Yet, doubtless, hearing that Achilles lives,
He still rejoices, hoping, day by day,
That one day he shall see the face again
Of his own son from distant Troy returned.
But me no comfort cheers, whose bravest sons,
So late the flower of Ilium, all are slain.
When Greece came hither, I had fifty sons : —

. . . A numerous house !

But fiery Mars hath thinned it. One I had,
One, more than all my sons the strength of Troy,
Whom standing for his country thou hast slain —
Hector. His body to redeem I come
Into Achaia's fleet, and bring, myself,
Ransom inestimable to thy tent.
Oh, fear the gods ! and for remembrance' sake
Of thy own sire, Achilles ! pity me,
More hapless still ; who bear what, save myself,
None ever bore, thus lifting to my lips
Hands dyed so deep with slaughter of my sons."

So saying, he wakened in his soul regret
Of his own sire ; softly he placed his hand
On Priam's hand, and pushed him gently away.
Remembrance melted both. Stretched prone before
Achilles' feet, the king his son bewailed,
Wide-slaughtering Hector ; and Achilles wept
By turns his father, and by turns his friend,
Patroclus ; sounds of sorrow filled the tent.
But when Achilles, satisfied at length
With lamentation, felt his bosom eased
Of its oppressive charge, and breathed again,
Upstarting from his seat, with pity moved
Of Priam's silver locks and silver beard,

He raised the ancient father by the hand,
Whom in wing'd accents kind he thus bespake :
 “ Numerous indeed thy sorrows are — alas !
How couldst thou venture to the ships alone,
Alone into my presence, who have slain
So many of thy sons renowned in arms ?
Thou hast a heart of iron, terror-proof.
Come — sit beside me. Let us, if we may,
Great mourners both, bid sorrow sleep awhile.
There is no profit of our sighs and tears ;
For thus, exempt from care themselves, the gods
Ordain man's miserable race to mourn.
Fast by the threshold of Jove's courts are placed
Two casks, one stored with evil, one with good,
From which the god dispenses as he wills.
For whom the glorious Thunderer mingles both,
His life is checkered with alternate good
And evil ; but to whom he gives unmixed
The bitter cup, he makes that man a curse,
His name becomes a byword of reproach,
His strength is hunger-bitten, and he walks
The blessed earth, unblest, go where he may.
So was my father Peleus at his birth
Nobly endowed, with plenty and with wealth
Distinguished by the gods past all mankind,
Lord of the Myrmidons, and, though a man,
Yet matched from Heaven with an immortal bride.
But even him the gods afflict, a son
Refusing him, who might possess his throne
Hereafter ; for myself, his only heir,
Pass as a dream, and while I live, instead
Of solacing his age, here sit, before

Your distant walls, the scourge of thee and thine.
Thee also, ancient Priam, we have heard
Reported once possessor of such wealth
As neither Lesbos, seat of Macar owns,
Nor Eastern Phrygia, nor yet all the ports
Of Hellespont, but thou didst pass them all
In riches, and the number of thy sons.
But since the gods first brought on thy domain
This woe, hostility and deeds of blood
Always surround the city where thou reign'st.
Cease, therefore, from unprofitable tears,
Which, ere they raise thy son to life again,
Shall doubtless find fresh cause for which to flow."

To whom the godlike ancient king replied :
" Urge not, divine Achilles, me to sit,
While Hector lies unburied in the camp :
Loose him, and loose him now, that with these eyes
I may behold my son ; accept a prize
Magnificent, which mayst thou long enjoy,
And, since my life was precious in thy sight,
Mayst thou revisit safe thy native shore ! "

To whom Achilles, lowering, and, in wrath :
" Move me no more. I purpose of myself
To loose him ; Thetis, daughter of the Deep,
Hath taught me that the will of Jove is such.
Priam ! I understand thee well. I know
That, by some God conducted, thou hast reached
Achaia's fleet ; for, without aid divine,
No mortal, even in his prime of youth,
Had dared the attempt ; guards vigilant as ours
He should not easily elude ; such gates,
So massy, should not easily unbar.

Thou, therefore, vex me not in my distress,
Lest I abhor to see thee in my tent,
And, borne beyond all limits, set at naught
Thee and thy prayer, and the command of Jove."

He said ; the old king trembled, and obeyed.
Then sprang Pelides like a lion forth,
Not sole, but with his two attendant friends,
Alcimus and Automedon the brave ;
For them (Patroclus slain) he honored most
Of all the Myrmidons. They loosed the mules
And horses from the yoke, then introduced
And placed the herald of the hoary king.
They lightened next the litter of its charge
Inestimable, leaving yet a vest
With two rich robes, that Priam might convey
The body not uncovered back to Troy.
Then, calling forth his women, them he bade
Lave and anoint the body, but apart,
Lest haply Priam, noticing his son,
Through stress of grief should give resentment
scope,
And irritate by some affront himself
To slay him in despite of Jove's commands.
They, therefore, laving and anointing first
The body, clothed it with a robe and vest ;
Then, Peleus' son disposed it on the bier,
Lifting it from the ground, and his two friends
Together heaved it to the royal wain.

William Cowper.

ODYSSEY, I., 319-365.

PENELOPE AND THE MINSTREL.

Soon as Athenè spoke the word,
She took the likeness of a bird,
And, skyward soaring, fled.
The counsels of the heavenly guest
Within Telemachus's breast
New strength and spirit bred.

His absent father to his thought
Was by his wakened memory brought
More freshly than of old :
But when Athenè's flight he saw,
A feeling deep of reverend awe
His inmost heart controlled.

He knew the stranger was a god ;
And hastening to his own abode,
He joined the suitor train.
A far-famed minstrel in the hall
Sang to the peers, who listened all
In silence to his strain.

As subject of his lay he chose
The mournful story of the woes
Borne by the Achæan host,

When, under Pallas' vengeful wrath,
Homeward returning was their path
Bent from the Trojan coast.

The song Icarius' daughter ¹ heard,
And put together every word
As from below it came ;
Straight did she from her bower repair
And hastened down the lofty stair,
That great, wisehearted dame.

Alone she went not — in her train
She took with her handmaidens twain ;
And when the peerless queen
Came where the suitors sate, aloof
Close by a post that propped the roof,
She stood with face unseen.

A veil concealed her cheeks from view,
And by each side a handmaid true
In seemly order stood ;
With tears fast bursting from her eyne,
Addressing thus the bard divine,
She her discourse pursued :

“Phemius! for men's delight thy tongue
Can many another flowing song
In soothing measure frame ;
Can tell of many a deed, which done
By god or man in days bygone,
Bards have consigned to fame.

¹ Penelope, wife of the absent Ulysses.

“Choose one of these, and all around,
 Silent will hear the dulcet sound,
 E'en as they drink their wine ;
 But cease that melancholy lay
 That wears my very heart away —
 A heavy woe is mine !

“How can I check the tide of grief,
 Remembering still that far-famed chief,
 Whose fame all Hellas fills ? ”
 Answered her son, “O mother mine !
 Why dost thou blame the bard divine,
 For singing as he wills ?

“Blame not the poet — blame to Heaven,
 Which to poor struggling men has given
 What weight of woe it chose.
 How can we charge the bard with wrong,
 If the sad burden of his song
 Turns on the Danaan woes ?

“Men, ever with delighted ear,
 The newest song desire to hear ;
 Then firmly to the strain
 Listen, which tells of perils done ;
 My sire is not the only one
 Who of the chiefs to Ilion gone
 Has not returned again.

“For many, to that fatal shore
 Who sailed away, came back no more ;
 Thy business is at home,

Thy servant-maidens to command,
And ply with an industrious hand,
The distaff and the loom.

“To men the guiding power must be,
At all times in these halls to me ;
For here my will is law.”
The queen went homeward as he bade,
And felt the words her son had said
Inspire her soul with awe.

Soon did she, with her handmaids twain,
Her lofty seated chamber gain.

And there, with many a tear,
Until Athenè came to steep
Her weary lids in balmy sleep,
Right sorrowfully did she weep
Her absent husband dear ;
While, seated still at festival,
The suitors in the dusky hall
Reveled with noisy cheer.

William Maginn.

ODYSSEY, IV., 121-230.

HELEN AT THE BANQUET.

FROM her perfumed chamber wending,
Did the high-born Helen go ;
Artemis she seemed descending,
Lady of the golden bow ;
Then Adrasta, bent on duty,
Placed for her the regal chair ;

Carpet for the feet of beauty
Spread Alcippe soft and fair.

Phylo came the basket holding,
Present of Alcandra's hand ;
Fashioned was its silver moulding
In old Egypt's wealthy land ;
She, in famous Thebè living,
Was of Polybus the spouse,
He with soul of generous giving
Shared the wealth that stored his house.

Ten gold talents from his coffer,
Lavers twain of silver wrought,
With two tripods as his offer,
Had he to Atrides brought ;
While his lady came bestowing
Gifts to Helen rich of price,
Gave a distaff, golden, glowing,
Gave this work of rare device.

Shaped was it in fashion rounded,
All of silver but the brim,
Where by skillful hand 't was bounded,
With a golden-guarded rim.
Now to Helen Phylo bore it,
Of its well-spun labor full,
And the distaff laid she o'er it,
Wrapped in violet-tinted wool.

Thronèd, then, and thus attended,
Helena the king addressed :

“ Menelaus, Jove-descended,
 Know'st thou who is here thy guest ?
Shall I tell thee, as I ponder,
 What I think, or false or true ;
Gazing now with eyes of wonder
 On the stranger whom I view ?

“ Shape of male or female creature,
 Like to bold Odysseus' son ;
Young Telemachus in feature,
 As this youth I seen have none.
From the boy his sire departed,
 And to Ilion's coast he came,
When to valiant war ye started,
 All for me — a thing of shame.”

And Atrides spake, replying,
 “ Lady, so I think as thou,
Such the glance from eyeball flying,
 Such his hands, his feet, his brow ;
Such the locks his forehead gracing :
 And I marked how as I told
Of Odysseus' deeds retracing,
 Down his cheek the tear-drop rolled,

“ While he wiped the current straying
 With his robe of purple hue.”
Nestor's son then answered, saying, —
 “ What thou speakest, king, is true.
He who at thy board is sitting
 Is of wise Odysseus sprung ;
Modest thoughts, his age befitting,
 Hitherto have stilled his tongue.

“To address thee could he venture,
 While thy winning accents flowed,
 In our ravished ears to enter,
 As if uttered by a god !
 At Gerenian Nestor’s sending
 Comes beneath my guidance he,
 In the hope thy well intending
 To his guest of help may be.

Many a son feels sorrow try him
 While his sire is far away,
 And no faithful comrade by him,
 In his danger prop or stay.
 So, my friend, now vainly sighing
 O’er his father absent long,
 Finds no hand, on which relying,
 He may meet attempted wrong.”

Kindly Menelaus spake him,
 Praised his sire in grateful strain,
 Told his whilom hope to take him
 As a partner in his reign ;
 All were softened at his telling
 Of the days now past and gone ;
 Wept Telemachus, wept Helen,
 Fell the tears from Nestor’s son.

Gushing came they for his brother,
 Slain by Dawn-born Memnon’s sword ;
 But his grief he strove to smother,
 As unfit for festal board.
 Ceased the tears for woe and slaughter,
 And again began the feast ;

Round Asphalion bore the water,
Tendered to each noble guest.¹

Then to banish gloomy thinking,
Helen on gay fancy bent,
In the wine her friends were drinking,
Flung a famed medicament :
Grief-dispelling, wrath-restraining,
Sweet oblivion of all woe ;
He the bowl thus tempered draining
Ne'er might feel a tear to flow.

No, not e'en if she who bore him
And his sire in death were laid ;
Were his brother slain before him,
Or his son with gory blade.
In such drugs was Helen knowing ;
Egypt had supplied her skill,
Where these potent herbs are growing,
Some for good and some for ill.

Maginn.

ODYSSEY, V., 55-75.

HERMES ARRIVES AT CALYPSO'S GROTTO.

AND now arriving at the isle, he springs
Oblique, and landing with subsided wings
Walks to the cavern 'mid the tall green rocks,
Where dwelt the goddess with the lovely locks.

¹ The translator has condensed into the two preceding stanzas the substance of the lines from 168 to 218. He resumes at 219.

He paused ; and there came on him as he stood
 A smell of cedar and of citron wood,
 That threw a perfume all about the isle ;
 And she within sat spinning all the while,
 And sang a low sweet song that made him hark
 and smile.

A sylvan nook it was, grown round with trees,
 Poplars, and elms, and odorous cypresses,
 In which all birds of ample wing, the owl
 And hawk had nests, and broad-tongued waterfowl.
 The cave in front was spread with a green vine,
 Whose dark round bunches almost burst with wine ;
 And from four springs, running a sprightly race,
 Four fountains clear and crisp refreshed the place ;
 While all about a meadowy ground was seen,
 Of violets mingling with the parsley green.
 So that a stranger, though a god were he,
 Might well admire it, and stand there to see ;
 And so admiring there stood Mercury.

Leigh Hunt.

ODYSSEY, VII., 81-132.

THE PALACE AND GARDENS OF KING ALCINOUS.

.
 Odysseus to Alcinöüs' halls paced on,
 And in his breast his stormy heart beat fast,
 He pausing, ere his feet the brazen threshold passed.

For, like the sun's fire or the moon's, a light
 Far streaming through the high-roofed house did
 pass

From the long basement to the topmost height.
There on each side ran walls of flaming brass,
Zoned on the summit with a blue bright mass
Of cornice ; and the doors were framed of gold ;
Where, underneath, the brazen floor doth glass
Silver pilasters, which with grace uphold
Lintel of silver framed ; the ring was burnished gold.

And dogs on each side of the doors there stand,
Silver and gold, the which in ancient day
Hephæstus wrought with cunning brain and hand,
And set for sentinels to hold the way.
Death cannot tame them, nor the years decay.
And from the shining threshold thrones were set,
Skirting the walls in lustrous long array,
On to the far room, where the women met,
With many a rich robe strewn and woven coverlet.

There the Phæacian chieftains eat and drink,
While golden youths on pedestals upbear
Each in his outstretched hand a lighted link,
Which nightly on the royal feast doth flare.
And in the house are fifty handmaids fair ;
Some in the mill the yellow corn grind small ;
Some ply the looms, and shuttles twirl, which
there
Flash like the quivering leaves of aspen tall ;
And from the close-spun weft the trickling oil will
fall.

For as Phæacian men surpass in skill
All mortals that in Earth's wide kingdoms dwell

Through the waste ocean, wheresoe'er they will,
The cleaving keel obedient to impel —
So far their women at the loom excel ;
Since all brave handiwork and mental grace
Pallas Athenè gave them to know well.

Outside the courtyard stretched a planted space
Of orchard, and a fence environed all the place.

There in full prime the orchard-trees grow tall,
Sweet fig, pomegranate, apple fruited fair,
Pear and the healthful olive. Each and all
Both summer droughts and chills of winter
spare ;

All the year round they flourish. Some the air
Of Zephyr warms to life, some doth mature.
Apple grows old on apple, pear on pear,
Fig follows fig, vintage doth vintage lure ;
Thus the rich revolution doth for aye endure.

With well-sunned floor for drying, there is seen
The vineyard. Here the grapes they cull, there
tread.

Here falls the blossom from the clusters green ;
There the first blushings by the suns are shed.
Last, flowers forever fadeless — bed by bed ;
Two streams ; one waters the whole garden fair ;
One through the courtyard, near the house, is
led ;

Whereto with pitchers all the folk repair.
All these the god-sent gifts to king Alcinoüs were.

Philip Stanhope Worsley.

ODYSSEY, IX., 80-104.

THE LOTUS-EATERS.

Now me the current and fell Boreas whirled,
Doubling Malea's cape, and far astray
Beyond the rude cliffs of Cythera hurled.
So for nine days along the watery way,
Teeming with monsters, me the winds affray
And with destruction ever seem to whelm :
But, on the afternoon of the tenth day,
We reached, borne downward with an easy
helm,
Land of the flowery food, the Lotus-eating realm.

Anon we step forth on the dear mainland,
And draw fresh water from the springs, and
there,
Seated at ease along the silent strand,
Not far from the swift ships our meal prepare.
Soon having tasted of the welcome fare,
I with the herald brave companions twain
Sent to explore what manner of men they were,
Who, on the green earth couched beside the
main,
Seemed ever with sweet food their lips to entertain.

Who, when they came on the delightful place
Where those sat feeding by the barren wave,
There mingled with the Lotus-eating race ;
Who naught of ruin for our comrades brave
Dreamed in their minds, but of the Lotus gave ;

And whoso tasted of their flowery meat
Cared not with tidings to return, but clave
Fast to that tribe, forever fain to eat,
Reckless of home-return, the tender Lotus sweet.

Those sorely weeping by main strength we bore
Back to the hollow ships with all our speed,
And thrust them bound with cords upon the
 floor,
Under the benches : then the rest I lead
On board and bid them to the work give heed,
Lest others, eating of the Lotus, yearn
Always to linger in that land, and feed,
Careless forever of the home-return :
Then, bending to the oars, the foamy deep they
 spurn.

Worsley.

ODYSSEY, X., 203-243.

CIRCE TRANSFORMS THE COMPANIONS OF
ULYSSES INTO SWINE.

Then in two bands I numbered all my train,
Each with its chief. One to myself I took :
One did to fair Eurylochus pertain.
Then we the lots in steely helmet shook,
And his leapt forth ; nor he the work forsook,
But passed with twain-and-twenty ranged around,
Weeping ; we after them yearned many a look
Weeping. So in the woods the house they found
Of Circe, stone well-hewn, and on conspicuous
 ground.

Wolves of the mountain all around the way,
And lions, softened by the spells divine,
As each her philters had partaken, lay.
These cluster round the men's advancing line
Fawning like dogs, who, when their lord doth
 dine,
Wait till he issues from the banquet-hall,
And for the choice gifts which his hands assign
Fawn, for he ne'er forgets them — so these
 all
Fawn on our friends, whom much the unwonted
 sights appall.

Soon at her vestibule they pause, and hear
A voice of singing from a lovely place,
Where Circe weaves her great web year by
 year,
So shining, slender, and instinct with grace,
As weave the daughters of immortal race.
Then said Polites, nearest, first in worth
Of all my friends: "Hark! through the echoing
 space
Floats a sweet music charming air and earth!
Call! for some goddess bright or woman gave it
 birth."

Thus spake he, and they lifted up their voice
And called her. She the brilliant doors anon
Unfolding bade them in her halls rejoice;
Who entered in not knowing, save alone
Eurylochos, misdoubting fraud. Full soon

Benches and chairs in fair array she set,
 And mixing meal and honey, poured thereon
 Strong Pramnian wine, and with the food they
 ate
 Beat up her baleful drugs, to make them quite for-
 get

Their country. They receiving drank, unwise.
 Forthwith she smote them with her wand divine,
 And drave them out, and shut them close in
 styes,
 Where they the head, voice, form, and hair of
 swine
 Took, but the heart stayed sane, as ere the wine
 Confused them; they thus to their lairs retreat;
 She food, whereon the brutish herd might dine,
 Furnished, mast, acorns, their familiar meat,
 Such as earth-groveling swine are ever wont to eat.

[Now Eurylochus, alone escaping the charm, returned to the ship. Then Ulysses must needs himself go to Circe if perchance he might deliver his comrades. And as he walked by the way, the god Hermes meeting him gave him the plant Moly¹ to be his help; and coming to Circe's house he so prevailed with her that she restored his companions to their proper shape.]

X., 388-427.

I ended. Forthwith Circe, wand in hand,
 Moved from the hall, and opening wide the styce
 Forth drave them: who before the goddess stand

¹ See note.

Like swine nine-seasoned. She, approaching
nigh,
Smeared over each a different drug, whereby
The hairs dropped from them which the former
bane
Had nurtured, and like men in majesty
To their old semblance they returned again,
But with new beauty dowered, a taller, younger
train.

Also they knew me and clasped eagerly
My hand, and happy lamentation rose
Of voices yearning as in agony,
Till the wide arches seemed to ring with woes.
She then herself, with pity pierced, bestows
These words : " Divine Odysseus, hasten hence !
First draw thy bark aground, and deep inclose
In the sea-caves thy tackling, and dispense
Safely thy goods, then bring thy loyal comrades
thence."

So spake she, and my manly heart obeyed ;
And to the ship descending and the shore
I found my friends, with miseries o'erweighed,
Shedding the frequent tear-drop evermore.
As when a sort of country calves doth pour
Thick round their grass-filled mothers, and with
blare
Of welcome urge their eager pastime, nor
Can the close fences round about their lair
Confine them, stung with joy, still leaping here and
there, —

So when these saw me with their eyes, they
pressed

Not without tears around me, and their blood
Stirred with such pulses in their yearning breast
As on the much-desired sweet earth they stood
Of Ithaca's rough island crowned with wood,
Their country-home, where they were born and
bred.

Mourning they spake : " At thy return such mood
We feel, as far from sorrows we had sped
To Ithaca : but haste, inform us of our dead ! "

I in soft words made answer : " From the waves
First hale we to the sandy continent
Our bark, and shelter in the chambered cave
For all our wealth and naval arms invent.
Thence unto Circe's halls magnificent
Move in my train, that ye your friends may find
Eating and drinking, who nowise repent
Their sojourn, such good cheer is there assigned ;
Plenty untold they reap and all things to their
mind."

Worsley.

ODYSSEY, XL., 385-456.

ULYSSES, VISITING THE LOWER WORLD, HEARS
FROM AGAMEMNON THE STORY OF HIS DEATH.

AFTERWARD, soon as the chaste Persephone hither
and thither

Now had scattered afar the slender shades of the
women,

Came the sorrowing ghost of Agamemnon Atreides ;
Round whom thronged, besides, the souls of the
others who also
Died, and met their fate, with him in the house of
Aigisthos.
He, then, after he drank of the dark blood, instantly
knew me ;
Ay, and he wailed aloud, and plenteous tears was
shedding,
Toward me reaching hands and eagerly longing to
touch me ;
But he was shorn of strength, nor longer came at
his bidding
That great force which once abode in his pliant
members.
Seeing him thus, I wept, and my heart was laden
with pity,
And, uplifting my voice, in winged words I ad-
dressed him :
“ King of men, Agamemnon, thou glorious son of
Atreus,
Say in what wise did the doom of prostrate death
overcome thee ?
Was it within thy ships thou wast subdued by
Poseidon
Rousing the dreadful blast of winds too hard to be
mastered,
Or on the firm-set land did banded foemen destroy
thee
Cutting their oxen off, and their flocks so fair, or it
may be,
While in a town’s defense, or in that of women, con-
tending ? ”

Thus I spake, and he, replying, said to me
straightway :

“ Nobly-born and wise Odysseus, son of Laertes,
Neither within my ships was I subdued by Poseidon
Rousing the dreadful blast of winds too hard to be
mastered,

Nor on the firm-set land did banded foemen destroy
me ;

Nay, but death and my doom were well contrived
by Aigisthos,

Who, with my cursèd wife, at his own house bidding
me welcome,

Fed me, and slew me, as one might slay an ox at
the manger !

So, by a death most wretched, I died ; and all my
companions

Round me were slain off-hand, like white-toothed
swine that are slaughtered

Thus, when some lordly man, abounding in power
and riches,

Orders a wedding-feast, or a frolic, or mighty
carousal.

Thou indeed hast witnessed the slaughter of numberless
heroes

Massacred, one by one, in the battle's heat ; but
with pity

All thy heart had been full, if thou hadst seen what
I tell thee, —

How in the hall we lay among the wine-jars, and
under

Tables laden with food ; and how the pavement, on
all sides,

Swam with blood ! And I heard the dolorous cry
of Kassandra,
Priam's daughter, whom treacherous Klytaimnestra
aneared me
Slew ; and upon the ground I fell in my death-
throes, vainly
Reaching out hands to my sword, while the shame-
less woman departed ;
Nor did she even stay to press her hands on my
eyelids,
No, nor to close my mouth, although I was passing
to Hades.
Oh, there is naught more dire, more insolent than a
woman
After the very thought of deeds like these has pos-
sessed her, —
One who would dare to devise an act so utterly
shameless,
Lying in wait to slay her wedded lord. I bethought
me,
Verily, home to my children and servants giving
me welcome
Safe to return ; but she has wrought for herself
confusion,
Plotting these grievous woes, and for other women
hereafter,
Even for those, in sooth, whose thoughts are set
upon goodness.”
Thus he spake, and I, in turn replying, addressed
him :
“ Heavens ! how from the first has Zeus the thun-
derer hated,

All for the women's wiles, the brood of Atreus !
What numbers
Perished in quest of Helen, — and Klytaimnestra,
the meanwhile,
Wrought in her soul this guile for thee afar on thy
journey."

Thus I spake, and he, replying, said to me
straightway :

"See that thou art not, then, like me too mild to
thy helpmeet ;

Nor to her ear reveal each secret matter thou
knowest ;

Tell her the part, forsooth, and see that the rest
shall be hidden.

Nathless, not unto thee will come such murder,
Odysseus,

Dealt by a wife ; for wise indeed, and true in her
purpose,

Noble Penelope is, the child of Ikarios. Truly,
She it was whom we left, a fair young bride, when
we started

Off for the wars ; and then an infant lay at her
bosom,

One who now, methinks, in the list of men must be
seated,

Blest indeed ! ah, yes, for his well-loved father, re-
turning,

Him shall behold, and the son shall clasp the sire,
as is fitting.

Not unto me to feast my eyes with the sight of my
offspring

Granted the wife of my bosom, but first of life she
bereft me.

Therefore I say, moreover, and charge thee well to
remember,
Unto thine own dear land steer thou thy vessel in
secret,
Not in the light; since faith can be placed in
woman no longer."

Edmund C. Stedman.

ODYSSEY, XI., 582-600.

THE PUNISHMENT OF TANTALUS AND SISYPHUS.

THERE also Tantalus in anguish stood,
Plunged in the stream of a translucent lake;
And to his chin welled ever the cold flood.
But when he rushed, in fierce desire to break
His torment, not one drop could he partake.
For as the old man stooping seems to meet
That water with his fiery lips and slake
The frenzy of wild thirst, around his feet,
Leaving the dark earth dry, the shuddering waves
retreat.

Also the thick-leaved arches overhead
Fruit of all savor in profusion flung,
And in his clasp rich clusters seemed to shed.
There citrons waved, with shining fruitage hung,
Pears and pomegranates, olive ever young
And the sweet-mellowing fig: but whensoever
The old man, fain to cool his burning tongue,
Clutched with his fingers at the branches fair,
Came a strong wind and whirled them skyward
through the air.

And I saw Sisyphus in travail strong
Shove with both hands a mighty sphere of stone.
With feet and sinewy wrists he laboring long
Just pushed the vast globe up, with many a groan ;
But when he thought the huge mass to have
thrown

Clean o'er the summit, the enormous weight
Back to the nether plain rolled tumbling down.

He, straining, the great toil resumed, while sweat
Bathed each laborious limb, and the brows smoked
with heat.

Worsley.

ODYSSEY, XX., 66-78.

THE DAUGHTERS OF PANDARUS.

AND so these daughters fair of Pandarus,
The whirlwinds took. The gods had slain their
kin;

They were left orphans in their father's house.
And Aphrodite came to comfort them
With incense, luscious honey, and fragrant wine ;
And Here gave them beauty of face and soul
Beyond all women ; purest Artemis
Endowed them with her stature and white grace ;
And Pallas taught their hands to flash along
Her famous looms. Then, bright with deity,
Toward far Olympus, Aphrodite went
To ask of Zeus (who has his thunder-joys
And his full knowledge of man's mingled fate)
How best to crown those other gifts with love
And worthy marriage : but, what time she went,

The ravishing Harpies snatched the maids away,
And gave them up, for all their loving eyes,
To serve the Furies who hate constantly.

Mrs. Browning.

ODYSSEY, XXII., 1-389.

THE SLAYING OF THE SUITORS.

Ulysses on his return to Ithaca makes his first appearance in the disguise of a beggar, in order the better to form his plans — revealing himself only to his son and a trusty servant. When all is ready he suddenly throws off his disguise and makes himself known to the astonished suitors.

STRIPT of his rags then leapt the godlike king
On the great threshold, in his hand the bow
And quiver, filled with arrows of mortal sting.
These with a rattle he rained down below,
Loose at his feet, and spake among them so :
“ See, at the last our matchless bout is o’er !
Now for another mark, that I may know
If I can hit what none hath hit before,
And if Apollo hear me in the prayers I pour ! ”

Thus did he speak, and aimed a bitter dart
Against Antinous. He the beauteous cup,
Twin-eared and golden, carved with curious art,
Was lifting in his hands and tilting up
Close to his red lips, the sweet wine to sup,
And in his mind of murder held no care.
Who could believe, ’mid feast and flowing cup,
One of a crowd, though he far mightier were,
Would for a guest black fate and evil death pre-
pare ?

.

Him with an arrow in his throat the king
Shot. Through his delicate neck the barb made
way.

He, falling backward, made the pavement ring.
Down clanged the cup, and where it clanged it
lay.

And, ere a man could wonder or gainsay,
Blood from the nostrils the wide floor imbrued.
He in a moment wildly kicked away
The table with both feet, and spilt the food,
And all the place with bread and broken flesh was
strewed.

And now, behold, the suitors a dire clang
Stirred in the palace, when they marked him fall,
And from the benches and the chairs they sprang,
Pale and aghast within the shadowy hall,
Peering about in terror from wall to wall.
Nor, as they looked, could they discern within
Spear, sword, nor shield, nor any arms at all.
Scared as from sleep, and with a troublous din,
They to divine Odysseus wrathful words begin :

“Stranger, not well thou doest to aim at men.
These are thy last lists ; thou shalt surely die.
See, by thy hand the bravest of our men,
Flower of all Ithaca, doth murdered lie.
Thy bones the vultures shall pick by and by.”
But each held back, averring that he slew
By chance the man. How fatal and how nigh
Death’s snares were set, they foolish never knew !
Whom the king sternly eyed, and to the godless
crew :

“Dogs, ye denied that I should e’er come back
From Troia’s people to my native land.
Long in your pride my house ye rend and wrack,
Yea, and ye force the women with violent hand,
And my wife claim while I on earth yet stand,
Nor fear the gods who rule in the wide sky,
Nor lest a mortal on the earth demand
Your price of guilt — and ye are like to die !
Round you death’s fatal toils inextricably lie.”

He ceased, and all were taken with pale fear,
Peering about in terror, if they might flee
Black doom and ruin and destruction sheer.
Then spake Eurymachus, and only he :
“If thou the Ithacan Odysseus be,
Now home returning to thy native land,
Well hast thou spoken : For I know that we
Oft in thy town and fields with violent hand,
And here within thy mansion, have much evil
planned.

“But now behold he lieth dead, the cause
Of all our crime, Antinoüs. He alone
Urged us to drink and revel and break the laws —
He in his heart, it is a thing well known,
Caring far less to make thy wife his own
Than for a scheme, which Zeus doth bring to
naught,
That here the king’s line might be overthrown ;
Yea, for thy child a secret snare he wrought,
And for himself in Ithaca the kingdom sought.

“ Now hath he fallen by the doom of fate.
But spare thy people who in after day
Swear in this country on thy will to wait,
And in thy palace the whole price to pay.
Of all things drunk and eaten, and to lay
Each one before thy feet fines worth a score
Of oxen, brass, and gold, whate’er we may,
Till thy heart warms to view the countless store.
Reason enough thou hast to feel enraged before.”

Him wise Odysseus sternly eyed, and spake :
“ Eurymachus, though ye the whole restore,
And all your own wealth and your fathers’ take,
And the earth ransack till ye add much more,
Never these hands shall the dire work give o’er
Ere your flown pride is to the full repaid.
Choose now to fight, or if ye list explore
Some byway, if escape may yet be made.
But, as I think, Death’s toils no longer ye evade.”

Then quailed their knees and heart, and thus
again
Eurymachus spake forth : “ O friends, the man
Will not give over till we all are slain.
Quick draw your knives, and pile up as ye can
Tables to cover us. It were best we ran
All in close volley against him, firm to try
And thrust him by the strength of all our clan
Down from the doors, and stir a public cry.
Then quickly his last arrow will the man let fly.”

Then he his knife drew, and with terrible cry
 Sprang toward the king; who, aiming at the
 breast,
 Hard by the nipple, let the arrow fly;
 And in his liver the keen barb found rest.
 Dropped from his hand the knife. He with prone
 chest
 Fell like a ruin, and threw down the meat
 And the rich wine-cup. His tall forehead's crest
 Knocked on the earth, he rattling with both feet
 The throne, and on his eyes the darkling death-rain
 beat.

Then rushed Amphinomus onward with drawn
 knife,
 To thrust Odysseus from the doors, but lo!
 First with the spear Telemachus reft his life,
 And 'twixt the shoulders made the iron go
 Clean through the lungs; and with a clang the
 foe
 Knocked with his forehead on the earth. Back
 pressed
 Telemachus, the long spear leaving so,
 Lest, from the wound when he the spear would
 wrest,
 One cut him down unwares, or stab him breast to
 breast.

.

And lo, the suitors their sharp spears once more
 Hurled; but Athenè sent the most part wide.

One hit the pillar, and one hit the door,
And one fell heavy on the wall aside.
Nathless Amphimedon with blood just dyed
Skin of the wrist of brave Odysseus' son.
Ctesippus, hurling o'er the tough bull's-hide,
Smote on the swineherd's shoulder — so passed on
The dart, and flew beyond him, and to earth fell
down.

Then did Odysseus and his friends renew
Their hurling, and among the crowd shot thus,—
Stormer of towns, the brave Odysseus, slew
Eurydamas ; and young Telemachus,
Amphimedon ; the swineherd, Polybus ;
The herdsman hit Ctesippus in the breast,
And cried : “ No longer vaunt and flee at us,
But let the gods speak, who are far the best.
This for the foot thou gavest to the suppliant guest.”

Also in close fight with his spear the king
Tore Agelaus ; the young prince his spear
Drave through Leiocritus. He ruining
Clanged with his forehead. And Athenè there
Waved her man-murdering ægis in the air.
Then, scared in spirit, through the hall they fled,
As when the gadfly in the spring of the year,
When the days lengthen, 'mid the kine makes
head,
And stings them into fury where at peace they fed.

And as when eagles, curven-beaked and strong,
Fly from the hills and the fleet birds assail ;

These in the low plain flit and cower along,
 Pounced on with fury, nor can flight avail
 Nor courage, while good sport the fowlers hail —
 So 'mid the suitors hovering evermore,
 Turning about they smite them, and deal bale.
 Direly the heads crashed, and a hideous roar
 Sounded forever, and still the bubbling earth ran
 gore.

.

Meanwhile the king pried busily to and fro,
 Lest one alive yet lurk, avoiding bale.
 And all he found in bloody dust laid low,
 Strewn, like dumb fishes on the sandy graile,
 Whom from the hoary deep the fishers hale
 In many-windowed net. They on dry land,
 Sick for the sea, gasp dying ; nor doth fail
 Fierce noon to kill them on the burning sand —
 Thus lay the slain men heaped by his victorious
 hand.

Worsley.

ODYSSEY, XXIII., 302-343.

ULYSSES TELLS HIS STORY TO PENELOPE.

SHE told him of the scorn and wrong
 She long had suffered in her house,
 From the detested suitor throng,
 Each wooing her to be his spouse.
 How, for their feasts, her sheep and kine
 Were slaughtered, while they quaffed her wine
 In plentiful carouse.

And he, the noble wanderer, spoke
Of many a deed of peril sore —
Of men who fell beneath his stroke —
Of all the sorrowing tasks he bore.
She listened, with delighted ear,
Sleep never came her eyelids near
Till all the tale was o'er.

First told he how the Cicones
He had subdued with valiant hand,
And how he reached, across the seas,
The Lotus-eaters' lovely land ;
The crimes by Polyphemus done,
And of the well-earned vengeance won,
For slaughter of his band.

Vengeance for gallant comrades slain,
And by the Cyclops made a prey ;
And how it was his lot to gain
The isle where Æolus holds sway ;
And how the Monarch of the wind
Received him with a welcome kind,
And would have sent away,

Home to his native isle to sail ;
But vainly against fate he strove,
By whom unroused a desperate gale
Over the fishy ocean drove,
And sent him wandering once again,
The toils and dangers of the main
With many a groan to prove.

And how he wandered to the coast
Where dwells the distant Læstrygon ;
How there his ships and friends he lost,
Escaping in his bark alone ;
He spoke of Circe's magic guile,
And told the art and deep-skilled wile
By the enchantress shown.

Then how to Hades' grisly hall
He went to seek the Theban seer,
In his swift ship ; how there with all
The partners of his long career
He met ; and how his mother mild
Who bore, and reared him from a child,
He saw while wandering there.

And how the dangerous strain he heard,
Sung by the Sirens' thrilling tongue ;
And how with dexterous skill he steered
His course the justling rocks among ;
How he, what none had done before,
Unscathed through dread Charybdis bore,
And Scylla sailed along.

And how the oxen of the sun
With impious hand his comrades slew ;
And how high-thundering Jove upon
Their flying bark his lightning threw,
Till by the bolt, of life bereft,
Perished his friends, he only left
Remaining of the crew.

And how, in the Ogygian isle,
He visited Calypso fair;
And how she sought with many a wile,
To keep him still sojourning there:
With fond desire 't was hers to crave,
That he, within her hollow cave,
Her nuptial bed should share.

Each hospitable art she tried,
His heart to win — his hopes to soothe;
She promised him, were she his bride,
Immortal life and ceaseless youth.
But all her promise, all her art,
Changed not the temper of his heart,
Nor shook his steadfast truth.

How, after many a year of toil,
When on Phæacian land he trod,
The king and people of the isle
Hailed him with honors of a god;
And sent him full of presents fair,
Of gold, and brass, and garments rare,
Back to his own abode.

So closed the tale. Then balmy sleep,
The healer of all human woes,
Did their relaxing members steep
In soft oblivion of repose.

Maginn.

HOMERIC HYMNS.

TO HERMES.

This hymn narrates the wonderful performances of the infant Hermes (Mercury) during the first day of his existence. The poet tells us that within a few hours of his birth he creeps to the door of his cavern home, where he finds a tortoise, from whose shell he constructs a lyre, thus becoming the inventor of that musical instrument. Then follows the main story of the hymn. In the evening, —

“Seized with a sudden fancy for fresh meat,” —

he ranges mountain and valley in quest of the herds of Apollo. He slays two of the cattle, and discovering the secret of fire, burns the bodies to leave no trace behind. The passage given in the text takes up the story at this point, narrating the infant's return to his cradle and his charming defense when charged by Apollo with the theft. The poem is too long to be given entire. The remaining stanzas tell how Apollo takes the little culprit to Zeus for trial, and how the matter is finally settled by the gift of Hermes' newly invented lyre to Apollo, the latter first stipulating that Hermes shall never steal from him the lyre or anything else.

ALL night he worked in the serene moonshine ;

But when the light of day was spread abroad
He sought his natal mountain-peaks divine.

On his long wandering, neither man nor god
Had met him, since he killed Apollo's kine,

Nor house-dog had barked at him on his road ;
Now he obliquely through the keyhole passed,
Like a thin mist, or an autumnal blast.

Right through the temple of the spacious cave
He went with soft light feet — as if his tread
Fell not on earth ; no sound their falling gave ;
Then to his cradle he crept quick, and spread
The swaddling-clothes about him ; and the knave
Lay playing with the covering of the bed,
With his left hand about his knees — the right
Held his beloved tortoise-lyre tight.

There he lay innocent as a new-born child,
As gossips say ; but, though he was a god,
The goddess, his fair mother, unbeguiled
Knew all that he had done, being abroad ;
“ Whence come you, and from what adventure wild,
You cunning rogue, and where have you abode
All the long night, clothed in your impudence ?
What have you done since you departed hence ?

“ Apollo soon will pass within this gate,
And bind your tender body in a chain
Inextricably tight, and fast as fate,
Unless you can delude the god again,
Even when within his arms — ah, runagate !
A pretty torment both for gods and men
Your father made when he made you ” — “ Dear
mother,”
Replied sly Hermes, “ wherefore scold and bother ?

“ As if I were like other babes as old
And understood nothing of what is what ;
And cared at all to hear my mother scold.
I in my subtle brain a scheme have got,

Which, while the sacred stars round Heaven are
 rolled,

Will profit you and me — nor shall our lot
Be as you counsel, without gifts or food
To spend our lives in this obscure abode.

“ But we shall leave this shadow-peopled cave,
And live among the gods and pass each day
In high communion, sharing what they have
Of profuse wealth and unexhausted prey ;
And, from the portion which my father gave
To Phœbus, I will snatch my share away,
Which if my father will not — natheless I,
Who am the king of robbers, can but try.

“ And if Latona’s son should find me out,
I’ll countermine him by a deeper plan ;
I’ll pierce the Pythian temple-walls, though stout,
And sack the fane of everything I can —
Caldrons and tripods of great worth no doubt,
Each golden cup and polished brazen pan,
All the wrought tapestries and garments gay.”
So they together talked ; — meanwhile the Day,

Ethereal-born, arose out of the flood
Of flowing Ocean, bearing light to men.
Apollo passed toward the sacred wood,
Which from the inmost depths of its green glen
Echoes the voice of Neptune, — and there stood
On the same spot in green Onchestus then
That same old animal, the vine-dresser,
Who was employed hedging his vineyard there.

Latona's glorious son began : — " I pray
Tell, ancient hedger of Onchestus green,
Whether a drove of kine has passed this way,
All heifers with crook'd horns? for they have
been

Stolen from the herd in high Pieria

Where a black bull was fed apart, between
Two woody mountains in a neighboring glen,
And four fierce dogs watched there, unanimous as
men.

" And, what is strange, the author of this theft
Has stolen the fattened heifers every one,
But the four dogs and the black bull are left :
Stolen they were last night at set of sun,
Of their soft beds and their sweet food bereft.

Now tell me, man born ere the world begun,
Have you seen any one pass with the cows? "

To whom the man of overhanging brows, —

" My friend, it would require no common skill
Justly to speak of everything I see :
On various purposes of good or ill

Many pass by my vineyard, — and to me
'Tis difficult to know the invisible
Thoughts, which in all those many minds may be.
Thus much alone I certainly can say :
I tilled these vines till the decline of day,

" And then I thought I saw, but dare not speak
With certainty of such a wondrous thing,
A child, who could not have been born a week,
Those fair-horned cattle closely following.

And in his hand he held a polished stick ;
And, as on purpose, he walked wavering
From one side to the other of the road,
And with his face opposed the steps he trod.”

Apollo, hearing this, passed quickly on ;
No wingèd omen could have shown more clear
That the deceiver was his father's son.

So the god wraps a purple atmosphere
Around his shoulders, and like fire is gone
To famous Pylos, seeking his kine there,
And found their track and his, yet hardly cold,
And cried — “ What wonder do mine eyes behold !

“ Here are the footsteps of the hornèd herd
Turned back towards their fields of asphodel ; —
But these are not the tracks of beast or bird,
Gray wolf, or bear, or lion of the dell,
Or manèd Centaur — sand was never stirred
By man or woman thus ! Inexplicable !
Who with unwearied feet could e'er impress
The sand with such enormous vestiges ?

“ That was most strange — but this is stranger
still ! ”

Thus having said, Phœbus impetuously
Sought high Cyllene's forest-cinctured hill,
And the deep cavern where dark shadows lie,
And where the ambrosial nymph with happy will
Bore the Saturnian's love-child, Mercury ;
And a delighted odor from the dew
Of the hill pastures, at his coming flew.

And Phœbus stooped under the craggy roof
 Arched over the dark cavern : Maia's child
Perceived that he came angry, far aloof,
 About the cows of which he had been beguiled,
And over him the fine and fragrant woof
 Of his ambrosial swaddling-clothes he piled ;
As among firebrands lies a burning spark
Covered, beneath the ashes cold and dark.

There, like an infant who had sucked his fill,
 And now was newly washed and put to bed,
Awake, but courting sleep with weary will
 And gathered in a lump, hands, feet, and head,
He lay ; and his beloved tortoise still
 He grasped and held under his shoulder-blade ;
Phœbus the lovely mountain goddess knew,
Not less her subtle, swindling baby, who

Lay swathed in his sly wiles. Round every crook
 Of the ample cavern, for his kine Apollo
Looked sharp ; and when he saw them not, he took
 The glittering key, and opened three great
 hollow
Recesses in the rock — where many a nook
 Was filled with the sweet food immortals swallow,
And mighty heaps of silver and of gold
Were piled within — a wonder to behold !

And white and silver robes, all overwrought
 With cunning workmanship of tracery sweet —
Except among the gods there can be naught
 In the wide world to be compared with it.

Latona's offspring, after having sought

His herds in every corner, thus did greet
Great Hermes : " Little cradled rogue, declare,
Of my illustrious heifers, where they are !

" Speak quickly ! or a quarrel between us

Must rise, and the event will be, that I
Shall haul you into dismal Tartarus,

In fiery gloom to dwell eternally !
Nor shall your father nor your mother loose
The bars of that black dungeon — utterly
You shall be cast out from the light of day,
To rule the ghosts of men, unblest as they."

To whom thus Hermes slyly answered : " Son

Of great Latona, what a speech is this !
Why come you here to ask me what is done
With the wild oxen which it seems you miss ?
I have not seen them, nor from any one
Have heard a word of the whole business ;
If you should promise an immense reward,
I could not tell more than you now have heard.

" An ox-stealer should be both tall and strong,

And I am but a little new-born thing,
Who yet, at least, can think of nothing wrong.

My business is to suck, and sleep, and fling
The cradle clothes about me all day long ;

Or, half asleep, hear my sweet mother sing,
And to be washed in water clean and warm,
And hushed and kissed and kept secure from harm.

“ Oh, let not e’er this quarrel be averred !

The astounded gods would laugh at you, if e’er
You should allege a story so absurd

As that a new-born infant forth could fare
Out of his home after a savage herd.

I was born yesterday — my small feet are
Too tender for the roads so hard and rough ;
And if you think that this is not enough,

“ I swear a great oath, by my father’s head,

That I stole not your cows, and that I know
Of no one else who might, or could, or did.

Whatever things cows are I do not know,
For I have only heard the name.” This said,

He winked as fast as could be, and his brow
Was wrinkled, and a whistle loud gave he,
Like one who hears some strange absurdity.

Apollo gently smiled and said, “ Ay, ay,

You cunning little rascal, you will bore
Many a rich man’s house, and your array

Of thieves will lay their siege before his door,
Silent as night, in night ; and many a day

In the wild glens rough shepherds will deplore
That you or yours, having an appetite,
Met with their cattle, comrade of the night !

“ And this among the gods shall be your gift, —

To be considered as the lord of those
Who swindle, house-break, sheep-steal, and shop-
lift ;

But now if you would not your last sleep doze,

Crawl out ! ” — Thus saying, Phœbus did uplift
The subtle infant in his swaddling-clothes.

Percy Bysshe Shelley.

TO MINERVA.

I SING the glorious Power with azure eyes,
Athenian Pallas ! tameless, chaste, and wise,
Tritogenia, town-preserving maid,
Revered and mighty ; from his awful head
Whom Jove brought forth, in warlike armor dressed,
Golden, all radiant ! wonder strange possessed
The everlasting gods that shape to see,
Shaking a javelin keen, impetuously
Rush from the crest of ægis-bearing Jove ;
Fearfully Heaven was shaken, and did move
Beneath the might of the Cerulean-eyed ;
Earth dreadfully resounded, far and wide ;
And, lifted from its depths, the sea swelled high
In purple billows ; the tide suddenly
Stood still, and great Hyperion's son long time
Checked his swift steeds, till where she stood sub-
lime,
Pallas from her immortal shoulders threw
The arms divine ; wise Jove rejoiced to view.
Child of the Ægis-bearer, hail to thee !
Nor thine nor others' praise shall unremembered
be.

Shelley.

HESIOD, 800 B. C.

THEOGONY, 1-34.

THE MUSES.

BEGIN we from the Muses, O my song !
Whose mansion is the mountain vast and holy
Of Helicon ; where aye with delicate feet
Fast by Jove's altar and purpureal fount
They tread the measured round : their tender limbs
Laved in Permessian waters, or the stream
Of blest Olmuis, or pure Hippocrene,
On the high top of Helicon they wont
To lead the mazy measure, breathing grace,
Enkindling love, and glance their quivering feet.
Thence break they forth tumultuous, and enwrapped
Wide with dim air, through silence of the night
Shape their ethereal way, and send abroad
A voice, in stilly darkness beautiful.
Jove ægis-armed they praise, in choral hymns
Of adoration ; and of Argos named
Majestic Juno, gliding on her way
With golden-sandaled feet : and her whose eyes
Glitter with azure light, Minerva born
From Jove ; Apollo, sire of prophecy,
And Dian, joyous in the sounding shaft ;
Earth-shaker Neptune, earth-enclasping god ;
And Themis, name adorable in heaven ;
And Venus, lovely with her tremulous lids ;

And Hebe, who with golden fillet binds
 Her brow ; and fair Dione, and the Morn,
 And the great Sun, and the resplendent Moon ;
 Latona, and Iäpetus, and him
 Of mazy counsel, Saturn ; and the Earth,
 And the vast Ocean, and the sable Night ;
 And all the holy race of deities
 Existing ever.

They to Hesiod erst
 Have taught their stately song ; the whilst his flocks
 He fed beneath all-sacred Helicon.
 Thus first those goddesses their heavenly speech
 Addressed, the Olympian Muses born from Jove :
 “ Night-watching shepherds ! beings of reproach !
 Ye grosser natures, hear ! we know to speak
 Full many a fiction false, yet seeming-true,
 Or utter at our will the things of truth.”

So said they — daughters of the mighty Jove
 All-eloquent — and gave unto my hand
 Wondrous ! a verdant rod ; a laurel-branch
 Of bloom unwithering ; and a voice imbreathed
 Divine ; that I might utter forth in song
 The future and the past : and bade me sing
 The blessed race existing evermore,
 And first and last resound the Muses' praise.

Charles Abraham Elton.

THEOGONY, 190-206.

APHRODITE BORN FROM THE FOAM OF THE
 SEA.

AND now swift-circling a white foam arose
 From that immortal substance, and a nymph

Was nourished in the midst. The wafting waves
 First bore her to Cythera the divine :
 To wave-encircled Cyprus came she then,
 And forth emerged, a goddess, in the charms
 Of awful beauty. Where her delicate feet
 Had pressed the sands, green herbage flowering
 sprang.

Her Aphrodite gods and mortals name,
 The foam-born goddess : and her name is known
 As Cytherea with the blooming wreath,
 For that she touched Cythera's flowery coast ;
 And Cypris, for that on the Cyprian shore
 She rose, amid the multitude of waves.
 Love tracked her steps and beautiful Desire
 Pursued ; while soon as born she bent her way
 Toward heaven's assembled gods ; her honors these
 From the beginning ; whether gods or men
 Her presence bless, to her the portion fell
 Of virgin whisperings, and alluring smiles,
 And smooth deceits, and gentle ecstasy,
 And dalliance, and the blandishments of love.

Elton.

THE WORKS AND DAYS, 59-104.

PANDORA AND HER CASKET.

*Creation of Pandora (Woman). Her Casket with
 Hope at the Bottom.*

THE Sire who rules the earth and sways the pole
 Had said, and laughter filled his secret soul :
 He bade the crippled ¹ god his hest obey,

¹ Hephæstus (Vulcan).

And mould with tempering water plastic clay ;
With human nerve and human voice invest
The limbs elastic and the breathing breast ;
Fair as the blooming goddesses above,
A virgin's likeness with the looks of love.
He bade Minerva teach the skill that sheds
A thousand colors in the gliding threads ;
He called the magic of love's golden queen
To breathe around a witchery of mien ;
And eager passion's never-sated flame,
And cares of dress that prey upon the frame ;
Bade Hermes last endue with craft refined
Of treacherous manners, and a shameless mind.

He gives command, the inferior powers obey :
The crippled artist moulds the tempered clay :
By Jove's design arose the bashful maid ;
The cestus Pallas clasped, the robe arrayed :
Adored Persuasion and the Graces young
Her tapered limbs with golden jewels hung :
Round her fair brow the lovely-tressèd Hours
A garland twined of spring's purpureal flowers :
The whole attire Minerva's graceful art
Disposed, adjusted, formed to every part :
And last the wingèd herald of the skies,
Slayer of Argus, gave delusive lies ;
Insidious manners, honeyed speech instilled,
And warbling accents, as the Thunderer willed ;
Then by the feathered messenger of heaven
The name Pandora to the maid was given ;
For all the gods conferred a gifted grace
To crown this mischief of the mortal race :
The Sire commands the wingèd herald bear

•

The finished nymph, the inextricable snare ;
To Epimetheus was the present brought.
Prometheus' warning vanished from his thought —
That he disclaim each offering from the skies,
And straight restore, lest ill to man arise.
But he received ; and conscious knew too late
The insidious gift, and felt the curse of fate.

Whilom on earth the sons of men abode
From evil free and labor's galling load ;
Free from diseases that with racking rage
Precipitate the pale decline of age.
Now swift the days of manhood haste away,
And misery's pressure turns the temples gray.
The woman's hands an ample casket bear ; —
She lifts the lid, — she scatters ills in air.
Hope sole remained within, nor took her flight,
Beneath the casket's verge concealed from sight.
The unbroken cell with closing lid the maid
Sealed, and the cloud-assembler's voice obeyed.
Issued the rest in quick dispersion hurled,
And woes innumerable roamed the breathing world :
With ills the land is rife, with ills the sea ;
Diseases haunt our frail humanity ;
Self-wandering through the noon, the night they
glide,
Voiceless — a voice the power all-wise denied.
Know then this awful truth ; it is not given
To elude the wisdom of omniscient Heaven.

Elton.

EARLY LYRIC AND ELEGIAC.

CALLINUS, 690 B. C.

EXHORTATION TO BATTLE.

How long will ye slumber ? when will ye take heart
And fear the reproach of your neighbors at hand ?
Fie ! comrades, to think ye have peace for your part,
Whilst the sword and the arrow are wasting our
land !

Shame ! grasp the shield close ! cover well the bold
breast !

Aloft raise the spear as ye march on the foe !
With no thought of retreat, with no terror confessed,

Hurl your last dart in dying, or strike your last
blow.

Oh, 't is noble and glorious to fight for our all, —
For our country, our children, the wife of our love !
Death comes not the sooner ; no soldier shall fall,
Ere his thread is spun out by the sisters above.

Once to die is man's doom ; rush, rush to the fight !
He cannot escape, though his blood were Jove's own.
For a while let him cheat the shrill arrow by flight ;
Fate will catch him at last in his chamber alone.

Unlamented he dies ; — unregretted. Not so,
When, the tower of his country, in death falls the
brave ;

Thrice hallowed his name amongst all, high or low,
As with blessings alive, so with tears in the grave.

Henry Nelson Coleridge.

TYRTÆUS, 680 B. C.

MARTIAL ELEGY.

How glorious fall the valiant, sword in hand,
In front of battle for their native land !
But oh ! what ills await the wretch that yields,
A recreant outcast from his country's fields !
The mother whom he loves shall quit her home,
An aged father at his side shall roam ;
His little ones shall weeping with him go,
And a young wife participate his woe ;
While scorned and scowled upon by every face,
They pine for food, and beg from place to place.

Stain of his breed ! dishonoring manhood's form,
All ills shall cleave to him : affliction's storm
Shall blind him wandering in the vale of years,
Till, lost to all but ignominious fears,
He shall not blush to leave a recreant's name,
And children, like himself, inured to shame.

But we will combat for our fathers' land,
And we will drain the lifeblood where we stand,
To save our children : — fight ye side by side,
And serried close, ye men of youthful pride,
Disdaining fear, and deeming light the cost
Of life itself in glorious battle lost.

Leave not our sires to stem the unequal fight,
 Whose limbs are nerved no more with buoyant
 might ;

Nor, lagging backward, let the younger breast
 Permit the man of age (a sight unblest)
 To welter in the combat's foremost thrust,
 His hoary head disheveled in the dust,
 And venerable bosom bleeding bare.
 But youth's fair form, though fallen, is ever fair,
 And beautiful in death the boy appears,
 The hero boy, that dies in blooming years :
 In man's regret he lives, and woman's tears ;
 More sacred than in life, and lovelier far,
 For having perished in the front of war.

Thomas Campbell.

ARCHILOCHUS, 670 B. C.

EQUANIMITY.

TOSSED on a sea of troubles, Soul, my Soul,
 Thyself do thou control ;
 And to the weapons of advancing foes
 A stubborn breast oppose ;
 Undaunted 'mid the hostile might
 Of squadrons burning for the fight.

Thine be no boasting when the victor's crown
 Wins thee deserved renown ;
 Thine no dejected sorrow, when defeat
 Would urge a base retreat :
 Rejoice in joyous things — nor overmuch
 Let grief thy bosom touch

'Midst evil, and still bear in mind,
How changeful are the ways of humankind.

William Hay.

ALCMAN, 660 B. C.

NATURE'S CALM.

THE mountain brows, the rocks, the peaks, are
sleeping,
Uplands and gorges hush !
The thousand moorland things are stillness keeping ;
The beasts under each bush
Crouch, and the hived bees
Rest in their honeyed ease ;
In the purple sea fish lie as they were dead,
And each bird folds his wing over his head.

Edwin Arnold.

MIMNERMUS, 620 B. C.

YOUTH AND AGE.

AH ! fair and lovely bloom the flowers of youth ;
On men and maids they beautifully smile :
But soon comes doleful eld, who, void of ruth,
Indifferently afflicts the fair and vile ;
Then cares wear out the heart : old eyes forlorn
Scarce reckon the very sunshine to behold —
Unloved by youths, of every maid the scorn —
So hard a lot God lays upon the old.

John Addington Symonds, M. D.

ALCÆUS, 600 B. C.

WINTER.

THE rain of Zeus descends, and from high heaven
A storm is driven :
And on the running water-brooks the cold
Lays icy hold :
Then up ! beat down the winter ; make the fire
Blaze high and higher ;
Mix wine as sweet as honey of the bee
Abundantly ;
Then drink with comfortable wool around
Your temples bound.
We must not yield our hearts to woe, or wear
With wasting care ;
For grief will profit us no whit, my friend,
Nor nothing mend :
But this is our best medicine, with wine fraught
To cast out thought.

John Addington Symonds.

ODE IN IMITATION OF ALCÆUS.

WHAT constitutes a state ?
Not high-raised battlement or labored mound,
Thick wall or moated gate ;
Not cities proud with spires and turrets crowned ;
Not bays and broad-armed ports,
Where, laughing at the storm, rich navies ride ;
Not starred and spangled courts,
Where low-browed baseness wafts perfume to pride.
No ; men, high-minded men,

With powers as far above dull brutes endued
 In forest, brake, or den,
 As beasts excel cold rocks and brambles rude ;
 Men who their duties know,
 But know their rights, and, knowing, dare maintain,
 Prevent the long-aimed blow,
 And crush the tyrant while they rend the chain :
 These constitute a state,
 And sovereign Law, that state's collected will
 O'er thrones and globes elate,
 Sits empress, crowning good, repressing ill.

Sir William Jones.

SAPPHO, 600 B. C.

ODE TO A LOVED ONE.

BLEST as the immortal gods is he,
 The youth who fondly sits by thee,
 And hears and sees thee, all the while,
 Softly speak and sweetly smile.

'T was this deprived my soul of rest,
 And raised such tumults in my breast ;
 For, while I gazed, in transport tossed,
 My breath was gone, my voice was lost ;

My bosom glowed ; the subtle flame
 Ran quick through all my vital frame ;
 O'er my dim eyes a darkness hung ;
 My ears with hollow murmurs rung ;

In dewy damps my limbs were chilled ;
 My blood with gentle horrors thrilled :

My feeble pulse forgot to play ;
I fainted, sunk, and died away.

Ambrose Philips.

HYMN TO APHRODITE.

THRONED in splendor, immortal Aphrodite !
Child of Zeus, Enchantress, I implore thee
Slay me not in this distress and anguish,
Lady of beauty.

Hither come as once before thou camest,
When from afar thou heard'st my voice lamenting,
Heard'st and camest, leaving thy glorious father's
Palace golden,

Yoking thy chariot. Fair the doves that bore thee ;
Swift to the darksome earth their course directing,
Waving their thick wings from the highest heaven
Down through the ether.

Quickly they came. Then thou, O blessed goddess,
All in smiling wreathed thy face immortal,
Bade me tell thee the cause of all my suffering,
Why now I called thee ;

What for my maddened heart I most was longing.
" Whom," thou criest, " dost wish that sweet Per-
suasion

Now win over and lead to thy love, my Sappho ?
Who is it wrongs thee ?

" For, though now he flies, he soon shall follow,
Soon shall be giving gifts who now rejects them.

Even though now he love not, soon shall he love
thee

Even though thou wouldst not."

Come then now, dear goddess, and release me
From my anguish. All my heart's desiring
Grant thou now. Now too again as aforetime,
Be thou my ally.

William Hyde Appleton.

TO EVENING.

O HESPERUS! Thou bringest all things home;
All that the garish day hath scattered wide;
The sheep, the goat, back to the welcome fold;
Thou bring'st the child, too, to his mother's side.

Appleton.

THE MAIDEN IN LOVE.

SWEET mother, I can spin no more to-day,
And all for a youth who has stolen my heart away.

Appleton.

TO ONE WHO LOVED NOT POETRY.

THOU liest dead, and there will be no memory left
behind
Of thee or thine in all the earth, for never didst
thou bind
The roses of Pierian streams upon thy brow; thy
doom
Is now to flit with unknown ghosts in cold and
nameless gloom.

Edwin Arnold.

THE MOON.

THE stars about the lovely moon
 Fade back and vanish very soon,
 When, round and full, her silver face
 Swims into sight, and lights all space.

Arnold.

DEATH.

To die must needs be sad, the gods do know it ;
 For were death sweet, they 'd die, and straightway
 show it.

Arnold.

SONG OF THE ROSE.

IF Zeus chose us a King of the flowers in his mirth,
 He would call to the rose, and would royally
 crown it ;
 For the rose, ho, the rose ! is the grace of the earth,
 Is the light of the plants that are growing upon
 it !
 For the rose, ho, the rose ! is the eye of the flowers,
 Is the blush of the meadows that feel themselves
 fair,
 Is the lightning of beauty that strikes through the
 bowers
 On pale lovers that sit in the glow unaware.
 Ho, the rose breathes of love ! ho, the rose lifts the
 cup
 To the red lips of Cypris invoked for a guest !
 Ho, the rose having curled its sweet leaves for the
 world

Takes delight in the motion its petals keep up,
As they laugh to the wind as it laughs from the
west.

Mrs. Browning.

ERINNA, 600 B. C.

EPITAPH ON HER FRIEND, BAUCIS.

PILLARS of death! carved sirens! tearful urn!

In whose sad keeping my poor dust is laid,
To those who near my tomb their footsteps turn,

Stranger or Greek, bid hail! and say, a maid
Rests in her bloom below; her sire the name

Of Baucis gave; her birth and lineage high:
And say her bosom-friend Erinna came,

And on this marble graved her elegy.

Elton.

THEOGNIS, 540 B. C.

SONG.

MUSES and Graces! daughters of high Jove,
When erst you left your glorious seats above
To bless the bridal of that wondrous pair,
Cadmus and Harmonia fair,
Ye chanted forth a divine air:

“What is good and fair

Shall ever be our care.”

Thus the burden of it rang:

“That shall never be our care

Which is neither good nor fair.”

Such were the words your lips immortal sang.

J. A. Symonds, M. D.

FRAGMENTS FROM THEOGNIS.

ENJOY THE PRESENT.

TAKE thy delight, my soul ! another day
Another race shall see, and I be breathless clay.
Vain mortals, and unwise ! who mourn the hour
Of death, not that of youth's departing flower.
For all, whom once the earth hath covered o'er,
Gone down to Erebus' unjoyous shore,
Delight no more to hear the lyre's soft sound,
Nor pass the jocund cups of Bacchus round.
So thou, my soul, shall revel at thy will,
While light is yet my hand, my head untrembling
still.

Henry Hart Milman.

EDUCATION.

To rear a child is easy, but to teach
Morals and manners is beyond our reach ;
To make the foolish wise, the wicked good,
That science never yet was understood.

The sons of Æsculapius, if their art
Could remedy a perverse and wicked heart,
Might earn enormous wages ! But, in fact,
The mind is not compounded and compact
Of precept and example ; human art
In human nature has no share or part :
Hatred of vice, the fear of shame and sin
Are things of native growth, not grafted in :
Else wise and worthy parents might correct
In children's hearts each error and defect ;

Whereas, we see them disappointed still —
 No scheme nor artifice of human skill
 Can rectify the passions or the will.

John Hookham Frere.

JOVE'S WAYS.

BLESSED, almighty Jove ! with deep amaze
 I view the world ; and marvel at thy ways !
 All our devices, every subtle plan,
 Each secret act, and all the thoughts of man,
 Your boundless intellect can comprehend !
 On your award our destinies depend.

How can you reconcile it to your sense
 Of right and wrong, thus loosely to dispense
 Your bounties on the wicked and the good ?
 How can your laws be known or understood ?
 When we behold a man faithful and just,
 Humbly devout, true to his word and trust,
 Dejected and oppressed ; whilst the profane,
 And wicked, and unjust, in glory reign,
 Proudly triumphant, flushed with power and gain ;
 What inference can human reason draw ?
 How can we guess the secret of thy law,
 Or choose the path approved by power divine ?

Frere.

RESIGNATION.

ENTIRE and perfect happiness is never
 Vouchsafed to man ; but nobler minds endeavor
 To keep their inward sorrows unrevealed.
 With meaner spirits nothing is concealed :
 Weak, and unable to conform to fortune,
 With rude rejoicing or complaint importune,

They vent their exultation or distress.
 Whate'er betides us — grief or happiness —
 The brave and wise will bear with steady mind,
 The allotment, unforeseen and undefined,
 Of good or evil, which the gods bestow,
 Promiscuously dealt to man below.

Frere.

RASH, ANGRY WORDS.

RASH, angry words, and spoken out of season,
 When passion has usurped the throne of reason,
 Have ruined many. Passion is unjust,
 And for an idle transitory gust
 Of gratified revenge dooms us to pay,
 With long repentance at a later day.

Frere.

THE POET'S DUTY.

THE servant of the Muse, gifted and graced
 With high preëminence of art and taste,
 Has an allotted duty to fulfill ;
 Bound to dispense the treasure of his skill,
 Without a selfish or invidious view ;
 Bound to recite, and to compose anew ;
 Not to reserve his talent for himself,
 In secret, like a miser with his pelf.

Frere.

SIMONIDES OF CEOS, 556-468 B. C.

DANAË AND HER BABE ADRIFT.

WHEN, in the carven chest,
 The winds that blew and waves in wild unrest
 Smote her with fear, she, not with cheeks unwet,
 Her arms of love round Perseus set,

And said : O child, what grief is mine !
 But thou dost slumber, and thy baby breast
 Is sunk in rest,

Here in the cheerless brass-bound bark,
 Tossed amid starless night and pitchy dark.

Nor dost thou heed the scudding brine
 Of waves that wash above thy curls so deep,
 Nor the shrill winds that sweep, —
 Lapped in thy purple robe's embrace,
 Fair little face !

But if this dread were dreadful too to thee,
 Then wouldst thou lend thy listening ear to me ;
 Therefore I cry, — Sleep, babe, and sea, be still,
 And slumber our unmeasured ill !

Oh, may some change of fate, sire Zeus, from thee
 Descend, our woes to end !

But if this prayer, too overbold, offend

Thy justice, yet be merciful to me !

J. A. Symonds.

MARATHON.

AT Marathon for Greece the Athenians fought ;
 And low the Medians' gilded power they brought.

John Sterling.

THERMOPYLÆ.

OF those who at Thermopylæ were slain,
 Glorious the doom, and beautiful the lot ;
 Their tomb an altar : men from tears refrain
 To honor them, and praise, but mourn them not.
 Such sepulchre, nor drear decay
 Nor all-destroying time shall waste ; this right have
 they.

Within their grave the home-bred glory
 Of Greece was laid : this witness gives
 Leonidas the Spartan, in whose story
 A wreath of famous virtue ever lives.

Sterling.

EPITAPH FOR THE SPARTANS WHO FELL AT
 THERMOPYLÆ.

Go, tell the Spartans, thou that passest by,
 That here obedient to their laws we lie.

William Lisle Bowles.

BACCHYLIDES, 450 B. C.

PRAISE OF PEACE.

To mortal men Peace giveth these good things :
 Wealth, and the flowers of honey-throated song ;
 The flame that springs
 On carven altars from fat sheep and kine,
 Slain to the gods in heaven ; and, all day long,
 Games for glad youths, and flutes, and wreaths, and
 circling wine.
 Then in the steely shield swart spiders weave
 Their web and dusky woof :
 Rust to the pointed spear and sword doth cleave ;
 The brazen trump sounds no alarms ;
 Nor is sleep harried from our eyes aloof,
 But with sweet rest my bosom warms :
 The streets are thronged with lovely men and young,
 And hymns in praise of boys like flames to heaven
 are flung.

J. A. Symonds.

CALLISTRATUS.

PATRIOTIC SONG.

I'LL wreathe my sword in myrtle bough,
The sword that laid the tyrant low,
When patriots, burning to be free,
To Athens gave equality.

Harmodius, hail ! though reft of breath,
Thou ne'er shalt feel the stroke of death !
The heroes' happy isles shall be
The bright abode allotted thee.

I'll wreathe my sword in myrtle bough,
The sword that laid Hipparchus low,
When at Athena's adverse fane
He knelt, and never rose again.

While Freedom's name is understood,
You shall delight the wise and good ;
You dared to set your country free,
And gave her laws equality.

Dr. Wellesley (Anthologia).

HYBRIAS, THE CRETAN.

SOLDIER'S SONG.

THE wealth I have is my sword and spear,
And the fence I fight with, my buckler fair ;
With these, the lord of all, I go ;
With these I plough, with these I sow ;

With these I tread the sweet red wine
 From grapes and vats that never were mine ;
 With these, albeit no varlets I fee,
 Wherever I come, men lackey me.

For the knaves are afeard of sword and spear,
 And the fence I fight with, my buckler fair ;
 And so at my knees they humbly fall, -
 Bringing me all and giving me all ;
 And they fawn upon me because of my sword,
 And because of my spear they call me lord ;
 For wealth unbounded is sword and spear,
 And the fence I fight with, my buckler fair.

Edwin Arnold.

ANONYMOUS.

SWALLOW'S SONG.

SHE is here, she is here, the swallow !
 Fair seasons bringing, fair years to follow !
 Her belly is white,
 Her back black as night !
 From your rich house
 Roll forth to us
 Tarts, wine, and cheese :
 Or if not these,
 Oatmeal and barley-cake
 The swallow deigns to take.
 What shall we have ? or must we hence away ?
 Thanks, if you give ; if not, we 'll make you pay !
 The house-door hence we 'll carry ;
 Nor shall the lintel tarry ;

From hearth and home your wife we'll rob ;
She is so small,
To take her off will be an easy job !
Whate'er you give, give largess free !
Up ! open, open to the swallow's call !
No grave old men, but merry children we !

J. A. Symonds.

IF IT ONLY WERE RIGHT.

If it only were right, how delightful 't would be,
To open the breast of a friend ;
And peep at his heart, and replace it again,
And believe in him then without end.

Arnold.

DRINK FROM MY CUP.

DRINK from my cup, Dear ! live my life — be still
Young with my youth ! have one heart, word, and
will,
One love for both ; let one wreath shade our eyes ;
Be mad when I am — wise when I am wise.

Arnold.

VANITY OF LIFE.

VAIN of mortal men the strength,
His life of care a weary length.
All his days so few and brief,
Toil on toil, and grief on grief,
And still, where'er his course he tends,
Inevitable death impends ;
And for the worst, and for the best,
Is strewn the same dark couch of rest.

Milman.

THE BEST GIFTS.

The best of gifts to mortal man is health ;
The next the bloom of beauty's matchless flower ;
The third is blameless and unfraudful wealth ;
The fourth with friends to waste youth's joyous
hour.

Milman.

ODE TO HEALTH.

O THOU, the first and best
Of the Immortal Blest ;
O Health ! how gladly would I dwell with thee,
Till my last sands are run,
And my brief life is done.
Come to my home, my willing guest to be !
If there be joy in wealth,
Or soft parental love,
Or the delicious stealth
With which young Aphrodite winds
Her nets around her captives' willing minds ;
Or if aught else of joy the gods bestow,
Or sweet cessation of our toil and woe :
With thee, O blessed Health,
All bloom in one unending spring,
And bliss where thou art not is ever on the wing.

Milman.

PINDAR, 522-443 B. C.

SECOND OLYMPIAN ODE.

FOR THERON, KING OF AGRIGENTUM, VICTOR
IN THE CHARIOT-RACE.

ANTISTROPHE III.

ALONE in famed Olympia's sand
The victor's chaplet Theron wore ;
But with him on the Isthmian strand,
 On sweet Castalia's shore,
The verdant crowns, the proud reward
Of victory his brother shared,
 Copartner in immortal praise,
 As warmed with equal zeal
The light-foot courser's generous breed to raise,
And whirl around the goal the fervid wheel.
The painful strife Olympia's wreath repays :
 But wealth with nobler virtue joined
The means and fair occasions must procure ;
 In glory's chase must aid the mind,
Expense and toil and danger to endure ;
With mingling rays they feed each other's flame,
And shine the brightest lamp in all the sphere of
 fame.

EPODE III.

The happy mortal, who these treasures shares,
Well knows what fate attends his generous cares ;
Knows, that beyond the verge of life and light,
In the sad regions of infernal night,
The fierce, impracticable, churlish mind
Avenging gods and penal woes shall find ;
Where strict inquiring justice shall bewray
The crimes committed in the realms of day.
The impartial judge the rigid law declares,
No more to be reversed by penitence or prayers.

STROPHE IV.

But in the happy fields of light,
Where Phœbus with an equal ray
Illuminates the balmy night,
And gilds the cloudless day,
In peaceful, unmolested joy,
The good their smiling hours employ.
Them no uneasy wants constrain
To vex the ungrateful soil,
To tempt the dangers of the billowy main,
And break their strength with unabating toil,
A frail disastrous being to maintain.
But in their joyous calm abodes,
The recompense of justice they receive ;
And in the fellowship of gods,
Without a tear, eternal ages live.
While banished by the fates from joy and rest,
Intolerable woes the impious soul infest.

ANTISTROPHE IV.

But they who, in true virtue strong,
The third purgation can endure ;
And keep their minds from fraudulent wrong
And guilt's contagion, pure ;
They through the starry paths of Jove
To Saturn's blissful seat remove :
Where fragrant breezes, vernal airs,
Sweet children of the main,
Purge the blest island from corroding cares,
And fan the bosom of each verdant plain :
Whose fertile soil immortal fruitage bears ;
Trees, from whose flaming branches flow,
Arrayed in golden bloom, refulgent beams ;
And flowers of golden hue, that blow
On the fresh borders of their parent streams.
These by the blest in solemn triumph worn,
Their unpolluted hands and clustering locks adorn.

EPODE IV.

Such is the righteous will, the high behest
Of Rhadamanthus, ruler of the blest ;
The just assessor of the throne divine,
On which, high raised above all gods, recline,
Linked in the golden bands of wedded love,
The great progenitors of thundering Jove.
There, in the number of the blest enrolled,
Live Cadmus, Peleus, heroes famed of old ;
And young Achilles, to those isles removed,
Soon as, by Thetis won, relenting Jove approved.

Gilbert West.

FOURTH OLYMPIAN ODE.

FOR PSAUMIS OF CAMARINA, VICTOR IN THE
CHARIOT-RACE.

OH, urging on the tireless speed
Of Thunder's elemental steed,
Lord of the world, Almighty Jove !
Since these thine Hours have sent me forth
The witness of thy champions' worth,
And prophet of thine olive grove ;
And since the good thy poet hear,
And hold his tuneful message dear ;
Saturnian Lord of Ætna hill !
Whose storm-cemented rocks encage
The hundred-headed rebel's rage ;
Accept with favorable will
The Muses' gift of harmony ;
The dance, the song, whose numbers high
Forbid the hero's name to die,
A crown of life abiding still !

Hark, round the car of victory,
Where noble Psaumis sits on high,
The cheering notes resound ;
Who vows to swell with added fame
His Camarina's ancient name ;
With Pisan olive crowned.
And thou, O father, hear his prayer !
For much I praise the knightly care
That trains the warrior steed ;
Nor less the hospitable hall

Whose open doors the stranger call ;
 Yet, praise I Psaumis most of all
 For wise and peaceful rede,
 And patriot love of liberty.
 What ? do we weave the glozing lie ?
 Then whoso list my truth to try,
 The proof be in the deed !
 To Lemnos' laughing dames of yore,
 Such was the proof Ernicus bore,
 When, matchless in his speed,
 All brazen-armed the racer hoar,
 Victorious on the applauding shore,
 Sprang to the proffered meed ;
 Bowed to the queen his wreathèd head :
 " Thou seest my limbs are light," he said :
 " And lady, mayst thou know,
 That every joint is firmly strung,
 And hand and heart alike are young ;
 Though treacherous time my locks among
 Have strewed a summer snow ! "

Reginald Heber.

FIRST PYTHIAN ODE.

POWER OF MUSIC.

STROPHE I.

GOLDEN lyre, that Phœbus shares with the Muses
 violet-crowned !
 Thee, when opes the joyous revel, our frolic feet
 obey.
 And minstrels wait upon the sound,

While thy chords ring out their preludes, and
 guide the dancers' way.
 Thou quenchest the bolted lightning's heat,
 And the eagle of Zeus on the sceptre sleeps, and
 closes his pinions fleet.

ANTISTROPHE I.

King of birds! His hookèd head hath a darkling
 cloud o'ercast,
 Sealing soft his eyes. In slumber his rippling
 back he heaves,
 By thy sweet music fettered fast.
 Ruthless Ares' self the muster of bristling lances
 leaves,
 And gladdens awhile his soul with rest.
 For the shafts of the Muses and Leto's son can
 melt an immortal's breast.

EPODE I.

But, whom Zeus loves not, back in fear all senseless
 cower, as in their ear
 The sweet Pierian voices sound, in earth or mon-
 strous Ocean's round.
 So he, Heaven's foe that in Tartarus lies,
 The hundred-headed Typho, erst
 In famed Cilician cavern nurst, —
 Now, beyond Cumæ, pent below
 Sea cliffs of Sicily, o'er his rough breast rise
 Ætna's pillars, skyward soaring, nurse of year-
 long snow!

F. D. Morice.

FIFTH ISTHMIAN ODE.

VISIT OF HERCULES TO TELAMON.

ANTISTROPHE II.

'T WAS at the Island-Chieftain's lordly feast
The high heroic summons came —
Stood in the portal high a godlike guest.
No need to name his name
Who wore the lion's hide, and brindled mane.
With eager cheer, and welcome fain,
Great Telamon the guest to greet
Reached forth a bowl of nectar sweet,
A bowl all beauteous to behold
Foaming with wine, and rough with sculptured gold,
And loudly bade the hero pour
The rich libation on the sacred floor.
His conquering hands he lifted high,
And called the Sire, the Ruler of the sky.
"If ever from my lips, Paternal Jove,
Thou heardest vow in love,
Grant me, my chief, my dearest prayer!
Be born of Eriboea a boy,
His noble father's noble heir,
And crown his happy lot with perfect joy!
His be the unconquered arm in fight,
Might, like this lion's might,
In Nemea's vale which my first prowess slew;
And as his might, his courage!" — At the words,
Swooped from the sky the king of birds.
With keenest joy his father's will he knew.

Then spake he in a prophet's solemn tone :

“ The son thou cravest shall be thine,
And be his noble name, my Telamon,
Called from yon bird divine.

Wide as the eagle's be his monarch-sway ;
Swoop he as the eagle on his prey.”

Bishop of Salisbury.

FRAGMENTS FROM PINDAR.

AN ECLIPSE OF THE SUN.

OH, why, thou Sun, with thine all-seeing ray
Beyond the range of mortal sight afar,
Sovereign of every star,
Robb'st thou the world, even at the noon of day ;
And makest darkling man in vain desire
The guiding light of thy intolerable fire ?
Why, wandering down the dark unwonted way,
In darkness drives thy car ?
By greatest Jove I supplicate
To Thebes' exalted state,
Urge undisastrous thy fleet steeds divine !
O noblest ! O thou universal sign !
Some bloody war dost thou presage,
Or withered harvest sad, or tempest's blasting rage ?
Or cruel strife destroying wide ?
Or inroad of the ocean-tide
Over the peaceful plain ?
Or wintry frosts, or summer rain
In torrent deluge sweeping down the vale,
To force from all our youth the wild and general
wail ?

Milman.

HAPPINESS OF THE DEPARTED.¹

FOR them the night all through,
 In that broad realm below,
 The splendor of the sun spreads endless light ;
 'Mid rosy meadows bright,
 Their city of the tombs with incense-trees,
 And golden chalices
 Of flowers, and fruitage fair,
 Scenting the breezy air,
 Is laden. There with horses and with play,
 With games and lyres, they while the hours away.

On every side around
 Pure happiness is found,
 With all the blooming beauty of the world ;
 There fragrant smoke, upcurled
 From altars where the blazing fire is dense
 With perfumed frankincense,
 Burned unto gods in heaven,
 Through all the land is driven,
 Making its pleasant places odorous
 With scented gales and sweet airs amorous.

J. A. Symonds.

¹ Mr. Symonds speaks of the above as "the fragment of that mighty threnos of Pindar's which sounds like a trumpet-blast for immortality, and, trampling under feet the glories of this world, reveals the gladness of the souls who have attained Elysium."

ÆSCHYLUS, 525-456 B. C.

AGAMEMNON, 1-39.

THE WATCHMAN AT ARGOS.

*The Watchman on the Roof of Agamemnon's
Palace at Argos waiting for the Beacon Fire
that shall signal the Fall of Troy.*

GRANT, O ye Gods ! a respite from this toil :
Night after night, this livelong year, I 've sate
Couched like a watch-dog on the palace roof
Of Atreus' son, and viewed yon starry conclave,
Those glorious dynasts of the sky, that bear
Winter and summer round to mortal men.
And still the signal lamp I watch, the fire
That shall flame forth intelligence from Troy —
The tidings of her capture. So commands
Our Queen's unfeminine soul, with hope elate.

And while my night - perturbed and dew - dank
couch

I keep, by gentle dreams unvisited,
Fear still usurps the place of sleep, nor leaves
My weary eyes to close in lasting slumber.
Still as I strive to guile the unquiet night —
Sad remedy ! with song or carol gay,
I can but weep and mourn this fatal house,
Not as of old with righteous wisdom ruled.

Come thou, my toils release ! break forth, break
forth

From darkness, fiery messenger of joy !

[Suddenly a beacon light is seen in the distance.]

All hail, thou glory of the night ! that blazest
With noonday splendor, wakening Argos up
To dance and song for this thrice-blest event !

What, ho ! what, ho !

Loud do I cry to Agamemnon's queen,
Swift leaping from her bed, to shriek aloud
Through all the palace her exultant hymn
To this auspicious lamp, since Troy's proud walls
Have fallen ! So tells yon blazing beacon-fire.

I the glad prelude will begin, and hail
This best good fortune of our lord. The dice
Could cast no luckier throw than yon bright beacon.

Oh, that this hand may grasp the gracious hand
Of Argos' king, returning to his home !
But peace ! no more ! the seal is on my lips !
The palace self, could it but find a voice,
Would speak from its dark walls ! To the under-
standing

I speak : to those who understand not — nothing.

Milman.

AGAMEMNON, 192-257.

THE SACRIFICE OF IPHIGENIA.¹

CHORUS.

Now long and long from wintry Strymon blew
The weary, hungry, anchor-straining blasts,

¹ See Note.

The winds that wandering seamen dearly rue,
Nor spared the cables worn and groaning masts;
And, lingering on, in indolent delay,
Slow wasted all the strength of Greece away.
But when the shrill-voiced prophet 'gan proclaim
That remedy more dismal and more dread
Than the drear weather blackening overhead,
And spoke in Artemis' most awful name,
The sons of Atreus, 'mid their armed peers,
Their sceptres dashed to earth, and each broke out
in tears,

And thus the elder king began to say :

“ Dire doom ! to disobey the gods' commands !
More dire, my child, mine house's pride, to slay,
Dabbling in virgin blood a father's hands.
Alas ! alas ! which way to fly ?
As base deserter quit the host,
The pride and strength of our great league all lost ?
Should I the storm-appeasing rite deny,
Will not their wrathfullest wrath rage up and swell ?
Exact the virgin's blood ? — oh, would 't were o'er
and well ! ”

So 'neath Necessity's stern yoke he passed,
And his lost soul, with impious impulse veering,
Surrendered to the accursed unholy blast,
Warped to the dire extreme of human daring.
The frenzy of affliction still
Maddens, dire counselor, man's soul to ill.

So he endured to be the priest
In that child-slaughtering rite unblest,

The first-fruit offering of that host
In fatal war for a bad woman lost.

The prayers, the mute appeal to her hard sire,
Her youth, her virgin beauty,
Naught heeded they, the chiefs for war on fire.
So to the ministers of that dire duty
(First having prayed) the father gave the sign,
Like some soft kid, to lift her to the shrine.

There lay she prone,
Her graceful garments round her thrown ;
But first her beauteous mouth around
Their violent bonds they wound,
With their rude inarticulate might,
Lest her dread curse the fated house should smite.
But she her saffron robe to earth let fall :

The shaft of pity from her eye
Transpierced that awful priesthood — one and all.

Lovely as in a picture stood she by
As she would speak. Thus at her father's feasts
The virgin, 'mid the reveling guests,
Was wont with her chaste voice to supplicate
For her dear father an auspicious fate.

I saw no more ! to speak more is not mine ;
Not unfulfilled was Calchas' lore divine.

Eternal justice still will bring
Wisdom out of suffering.
So to the fond desire farewell,
The inevitable future to foretell ;
'T is but our woe to antedate ;

Joint knit with joint, expands the full-formed fate.

Yet at the end of these dark days

May prospering weal return at length ;

Thus in his spirit prays

He of the Apian land the sole remaining strength.

Milman.

AGAMEMNON, 281-316.

THE BEACON FIRES.

*Clytemnestra describes the Progress of the Beacon
Fires that carried the Tidings of the Fall of
Troy.*

A GLEAM — a gleam — from Ida's height,

By the Fire-god sent, it came ;

From watch to watch it leapt, that light,

As a rider rode the flame !

It shot through the startled sky,

And the torch of that blazing glory

Old Lemnos caught on high,

On its holy promontory,

And sent it on, the jocund sign,

To Athos, Mount of Jove divine.

Wildly the while, it rose from the isle,

So that the might of the journeying Light

Skimmed over the back of the gleaming brine !

Farther and faster speeds it on,

Till the watch that keep Macistus steep

See it burst like a blazing Sun !

Doth Macistus sleep

On his tower-clad steep ?

No ! rapid and red doth the wild fire sweep ;

It flashes afar on the wayward stream
Of the wild Euripus, the rushing beam !
It rouses the light on Messapion's height,
And they feed its breath with the withered heath.
But it may not stay !
And away — away —
It bounds in its freshening might.

Silent and soon,
Like a broadened moon,
It passes in sheen, Asopus green,
And bursts on Cithæron gray !
The warder wakes to the Signal-rays,
And it swoops from the hill with a broader blaze.

On, on the fiery Glory rode ;
Thy lonely lake, Gorgopis, glowed !
To Megara's Mount it came ;
They feed it again
And it streams amain —

A giant beard of Flame !

The headland cliffs that darkly down
O'er the Saronic waters frown,
Are passed with the Swift One's lurid stride,
And the huge rock glares on the glaring tide.
With mightier march and fiercer power
It gained Arachne's neighboring tower ;
Thence on our Argive roof its rest it won,
Of Ida's fire the long-descended Son !

Bright Harbinger of glory and of joy !
So first and last with equal honor crowned,
In solemn feasts the race-torch circles round. —
And these my heralds ! — this my SIGN OF PEACE ;

Lo ! while we breathe, the victor lords of Greece
Stalk, in stern tumult, through the halls of Troy !
E. Bulwer-Lytton.

AGAMEMNON, 405-474.

THE WOE WROUGHT BY HELEN.

CHORUS.

AND she, unto her country and her kin
Leaving the clash of shields and spears and arming
ships,
And bearing unto Troy destruction for a dower,
And overbold in sin,
Went fleetly through the gates, at midnight hour.
Oft, from the prophets' lips,
Moaned out the warning and the wail — Ah woe !
Woe for the home, the home ! and for the chief-
tains, woe !
Woe for the bride-bed warm
Yet from the lovely limbs, the impress of the form
Of her who loved her lord awhile ago !
And woe for him who stands
Shamed, silent, unreproachful, stretching hands
That find her not, and sees, yet will not see,
That she is far away !
And his sad fancy, yearning o'er the sea,
Shall summon and recall
Her wraith, once more to queen it in his hall.
And sad with many memories,
The fair cold beauty of each sculptured face —
And all to hatefulness is turned their grace,

Seen blankly by forlorn and hungering eyes !
And when the night is deep,
Come visions, sweet and sad, and bearing pain
Of hopings vain —
Void, void and vain, for scarce the sleeping sight
Hath seen its old delight,
When through the grasps of love that bid it stay
It vanishes away
On silent wings that roam adown the ways of Sleep !

Such are the sights, the sorrows fell,
About our hearth — and worse, whereof I may not
tell.

But, all the wide town o'er,
Each home that sent its master far away
From Hellas' shore
Feels the keen thrill of heart, the pang of loss to-
day ;

For, truth to say,
The touch of bitter death is manifold !
Familiar was each face, and dear as life,
That went unto the war ;
But thither, whence a warrior went of old,
Doth naught return —
Only a spear and sword, and ashes in an urn !
For Ares, lord of strife,
Who doth the swaying scales of battle hold,
War's money-changer, giving dust for gold,
Sends back, to hearts that held them dear,
Scant ash of warriors, wept with many a tear,
Light to the hand, but heavy to the soul ;
Yea, fills the light urn full

With what survived the flame —
Death's dusty measure of a hero's frame!

"Alas!" one cries, "and yet alas again!
Our chief is gone, the hero of the spear,
And hath not left his peer!"

"Ah woe!" another moans — "my spouse is slain,
The death of honor, rolled in dust and blood,
Slain for a woman's sin, a false wife's shame!"

Such muttered words of bitter mood
Rise against those who went forth to reclaim;
Yea, jealous wrath creeps on, against the Atrides'
name!

And others, far beneath the Ilian wall,
Sleep their last sleep — the goodly chiefs and tall,
Couched in the foeman's land, whereon they gave
Their breath, and lords of Troy, each in his Trojan
grave!

Therefore, for each and all, the city's breast
Is heavy with a wrath suppressed,
As deep and deadly as a curse more loud

Flung by the common crowd:
And, brooding deeply, doth my soul await
Tidings of coming fate,
Buried as yet in darkness' womb.

For not forgetful is the high gods' doom,
Against the sons of carnage: all too long
Seems the unjust to prosper and be strong,

Till the dark Furies come,
And smite with stern reversal all his home,
Down into dim obstruction — he is gone,

And help and hope among the lost is none.
O'er him who vaunteth an exceeding fame
 Impends a woe condign ;
The vengeful bolt upon his eyes doth flame,
 Sped from the hand divine.
This bliss be mine, ungrudged of God to feel,
 To tread no city to the dust,
 Nor see my own life thrust
Down to a slave's estate beneath another's heel !

E. D. A. Morshead.

AGAMEMNON, 551-579.

SUFFERINGS OF THE GREEKS DURING THE TROJAN WAR.

HERALD.

'T is well ! all well ! in the long range of time.
One man may say, things turn out right, while
others
Heap them with blame. Who, but the gods in
heaven,
Lives through all ages without sin or woe ?
If I should tell our toils and weary watchings,
Rare landings, sleep snatched on the hard planks,
what hour
Had not its dreary lot of wretchedness ?
On land worse sufferings than the worst at sea.
Our beds were strewn under the hostile walls ;
And from the skies, and from the fenny land,
Came dripping the chill dews, rotting our clothes,
Matting our hair, like hides of shaggy beasts.
Our winters shall I tell, when the bleak cold

Intolerable, down from Ida's snows
 Came rushing; even the birds fell dead around us.
 Or summer heats, when on his midday couch
 Heavily fell the waveless sea, no breath
 Stirring the sultry air. Why grieve we now?
 All is gone by! the toils all o'er! the dead —
 No thought have they of rising from their graves!
 Why count the suffering of those who have fallen?
 The living only, fickle fortune's wrath
 Afflicts with grief. I to calamity
 Have bid a long farewell. Of the Argive host
 To us, the few survivors, our rich gains
 Weigh down in the scale our poor uncounted losses.
 In the face of the noonday sun we make our boast,
 Flying abroad over the sea and land,
 That now the Argive host hath taken Troy;
 And in the ancestral temples of their gods
 Have nailed the spoils for our eternal glory.

Milman.

AGAMEMNON, 782-974.

AGAMEMNON'S RETURN HOME AFTER THE FALL OF TROY.

*Entering, He is welcomed by the Chorus (Elders
of Argos) in Front of his Palace.*

CHORUS.

HAIL, king of Atreus' race renowned,
 Who Troy has leveled with the ground!
 How to address thee — how adore;
 Nor with exceeding praise run o'er,

Nor turning short, pass by too light
The mark and standard of thy might !
Most men do justice' law transgress,
Being than seeming honoring less.
And every one is prompt of will
To groan over another's ill ;
So grief its prudent temperance keep,
Nor sink into the heart too deep,
As with mock sympathy to guile,
Force on the face the unwilling smile.
Who knows his sheep, the shepherd good,
The eye of man will ne'er delude,
Seeking his friend's blind heart to move
With a faint, thin, and watery love.
Thou when, for sake of Helen lost,
Thou didst array that mighty host,
Wert written (naught may I disguise),
Within my books as most unwise,
Handling with impulse rash and blind
The helm of thy misguided mind.
But no light-minded counselor now
To that bold army seemest thou —
The sagest and the truest friend,
Who hast brought their toils to this proud end.
For evermore will Time reveal
Those who with prescient judgment wise,
Nor missing golden opportunities,
Administer for public good the public weal.

AGAMEMNON.

'T is meet that Argos and my country's gods
First I salute, gracious accomplices

In my return, and the just vengeance wrought
On Priam's city. The great gods the cause
Judge not from pleaders' subtle rhetoric,
But cast their suffrage-balls with one consent
Into the bloody urn, that doomed to ruin
Ilion, to one wide slaughter all her sons ;
And in the opposite urn was only Hope
Wild-grasping with her clenched and unfilled hands.

Now captive Troy is one vast cloud of smoke ;
Howls Atè's hurricane, the dying embers
Steam up with the fat reek of burning riches.
For this our unforgetting thanks we pay
To the great gods, since we our hunters' toils
With one wide sweep have o'er the city cast.
The Argive dragon, for that woman's sake,
Hath utterly razed to earth once famous Troy.
Foaled by the fatal horse, the shielded host,
At the Pleiads' setting, leaped terrific forth ;
The roaring lion rampant o'er the towers
Sprang, glutting his fierce maw with kingly blood.

Such is my prelude to the immortal gods,
But for the rest my thoughts are as your thoughts.
The same aver I, and do fully assent.
Few, few are born with that great gift, to hail
Unenvying their friends' prosperity.
Envy, slow poison gnawing at the heart,
Doubles the anguish of the man diseased ;
By his own woes weighed heavily down, he groans
Gazing at the happiness before his doors.
From sad experience of mankind I speak,
To human life holding the mirror up.
Even as the shadow of a shade I saw

Those that once seemed my dearest, best of friends.
Only Ulysses, who against his will
Set sail, my one true yokemate, by my side
Ran in the harness of the battle-car.
But speak I of the living or the dead,
Passes, alas ! my knowledge.

For the city
And for our gods holding our festal games
In full assembly, take we counsel now ;
Take counsel how what now stands well may stand
Unshaken even unto the end of time ;
And wheresoe'er needs healing remedy,
By cautery or incision, skillful and keen,
We will divert the growing slow disease.

Enter we now our palace' hallowed hearths,
Our gods propitiated, who to far lands
Sent us, and brought us back ; and Victory,
Who hath tracked our steps, abide with us forever !

CLYTEMNESTRA enters.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Men ! Citizens ! Elders of Argos' state !
I blush not in your presence to pour forth
All a wife's fondness for her lord beloved ;
For timorous bashfulness soon dies away
Before familiar faces. Not from others
Learning, but only from mine own sad knowledge
Will I describe my solitary life,
While he was far away under Troy's walls.
And first, what monstrous misery to sit,
A desolate woman in a lonely house !
No man in the wide palace, listening still

To rumors strange, confused, and contrary.
First comes a melancholy messenger,
Another then, with tidings worse and worse,
Shrieking their dreary tale through the lone chambers :

And thus poured down the news upon the house —

“ The wounded man had had his body pierced
With gaping holes as many as in a net ; ”
Then “ he was dead,” so swelled and grew the tale.
A second triple-bodied Geryon, he
(Of Geryon I speak living on earth,
Not Geryon in the infernal realms below)
Three deaths had suffered in his threefold form,
And thence been wrapped in a winding sheet of
earth.

While these conflicting rumors thronged around,
Others the desperate halter round my neck,
By which I hung, loosening with friendly hand,
Brought me with gentle violence back to life.
And all the while our boy, as had been meet —
He, seal and pledge of our affianced troth —
Orestes, was not by me. Marvel not.
That child, the Phocian Strophius, once our foe,
Now our close friend, nurses within his palace.
He the dark choice of evil that lay before me
Showed, prophet-like — thy peril 'neath Troy's
walls,

Or democratic anarchy at home,
The senate overthrown, and the mad people,
As wont with men, trampling upon the fallen.
Such was the warning — warning that deceived not.
To me the gushing fountains of my tears

Were utterly dried up, no drop would fall.
 Mine eyes grew dim upon my late-sought bed,
 Weeping, and watching the neglected lamps
 Paling their feebler light ; and in my dreams
 I woke at the shrill buzzing of the gnats ;
 I saw thee suffering woes more long and sad
 Than could be crowded in my hours of sleep.

I, that have borne all this with soul unblenched,
 May now address my lord in happier phrase.
 Thou, watchdog of the unattainted fold !
 The mainstay that secures the straining ship !
 The firm-based pillar, bearing the lofty roof !
 The only son to childless father born !
 Land by the lost despairing sailor seen !
 Day beaming beautiful after fierce storms !
 Cool fountain to the thirsty traveler !

And, oh ! what bliss to be delivered thus
 From the hard bondage of necessity.
 None grudge us now our joy ! For woe enough
 We have endured.

And now, O most beloved,
 Alight thou from thy chariot.

[As he is about to step down.]

Stay, nor set
 On the bare earth, O King, thy hallowed foot ;
 That which hath trampled upon ruined Troy.
 Why tarry ye, my damsels ? 'T is your office
 To strew the path with gorgeous carpetings ;
 Like purple pavement rich be all his way ;
 That justice to his house may lead him in —
 The house he little dreamed of. All the rest
 Leave to my care that may not sleep. So please
 The gods, what 's justly destined shall be done.

AGAMEMNON.

Daughter of Leda, guardian of mine house !
Of my long absence thou hast spoken well,
But hast been somewhat lavish of thy praise.
Praise in due measure and discreet is well,
Yet may that guerdon come from others best.
Treat me not like a soft and delicate woman,
Nor, gazing open-mouthed, grovelling on earth
Like a barbarian, raise discordant cry ;
Nor, strewing with bright tapestries my way,
Make me an envy to all-jealous Heaven.
These are the proud prerogatives of the gods ;
That mortals thus should walk on rich embroid-
eries

Beseems not : do it I cannot without awe.
As a man honor me, not as a god !
Though she wipe not her feet on carpetings,
Nor variegated garments fine, Fame lifts
High her clear voice. To be of humble mind
Is God's best gift. Blessed is only he
Who in unbroken happiness ends his days.
Still may I prosper, thus not overbold.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Say ye not so ; nor cross my purpose thus.

AGAMEMNON.

Think not that I will change my fixed resolve.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Hast thou thus sworn in awe of the great gods ?

AGAMEMNON.

If man e'er knew his purpose, know I mine.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Had Priam conquered, what had Priam done ?

AGAMEMNON.

He would have trod on gorgeous carpetings.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

So, cower not thou before the blame of men.

AGAMEMNON.

The people's voice bears with it mighty power.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

He that's not envied never is admired.

AGAMEMNON.

'Tis not a woman's part to love a fray.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

The prosperous should condescend to yield.

AGAMEMNON.

Wilt thou be conqueress in this gentle strife ?

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Be thou persuaded, yield of thy own free will !

AGAMEMNON.

If thou wilt have it so, then let some slave
Loose instantly the sandals from my feet,

Lest some dread god with jealous eye behold me
Walking like them upon the sea-dipped purple.
It were great shame to pamper one's own body,
Trampling on riches with proud prodigal feet,
And tapestries with untold silver bought.
So much for this.

But thou this stranger maid ¹
Lead in with gracious welcome. The high gods
On him who rules his slaves with gentleness
Look gracious : for to bear the yoke of slavery
Is a sore trial to the struggling will.
And she, of our rich spoils the chosen flower,
The army's precious gift, follows me here.
And since to yield to thee I am compelled,
Walking on purple, enter I the palace.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Who shall go quench the prodigal sea, that still
Teems with bright purple, worth its weight in silver,
The ever-fresh and never-fading dye
That steeps our robes in everlasting colors ?
Of these, O king, our house hath ample store —
Our house that knows not vulgar poverty.
Of many as rich the trampling in the dust
I would have vowed, if the oracular shrine,
At which I knelt, had uttered such decree,
Working the ransom for thy precious life.
Be the root sound, upsprings the full-leaved tree,
Offering cool shade beneath the dog-star heat.
So as thou cam'st to the domestic hearth,
'T was as a sunny warmth in winter time,

¹ His captive, the Trojan Cassandra.

When Jove the sharp grape ripens to rich wine :
And a delicious freshness fills the house,
The prime of men moving through the long cham-
bers.

Jove ! Jove ! that all things perfectest, my prayers
Bring to perfection ! to perfection bring
What thou hast yet to do ! Be this thy care.

Milman.

AGAMEMNON, 1295-1517.

THE MURDER OF AGAMEMNON.¹

CHORUS.

O WOEFULLEST of women, wise as woeful !
Thy speech hath wandered far. But if in truth
Thou dost foresee thy death, why, like a heifer,
God-driven, to the altar dost thou boldly tread ?

CASSANDRA.

There 's no escape. What gain I by delay ?

CHORUS.

Who lingers still wins something by delay.

CASSANDRA.

My day is come ; flight were but little gain.

CHORUS.

Thou 'lt suffer more by being overbold.

CASSANDRA.

A glorious death is mortals' noblest grace.

¹ See Note.

CHORUS.

The happy speak not thus. That ne'er was heard.

CASSANDRA.

Oh! Oh! my father! Oh thy valiant sons!

[Starting back from the palace door.]

CHORUS.

How now! what terror makes thee thus start back?

CASSANDRA.

Foh! foh!

CHORUS.

Why this foh, foh! unless thou art sick at heart?

CASSANDRA.

Foh! how the house smells with the reek of blood!

CHORUS.

'Tis but the smell of the sacrificial fires!

CASSANDRA.

It is the vapor oozing from a tomb.

CHORUS.

Sooth, 'tis no smell of Syrian incense rich.

CASSANDRA (*at the portal*).

Well, then I go to shriek throughout the palace

Mine own and Agamemnon's bloody fate.

Enough of life! enough! Strangers! good strangers!

I am not screaming like a timorous bird
That hides itself behind the bush in vain !
To one about to die, bear ye this witness —
When that a woman dies for me a woman,
A man ill-wedded for a murdered man,
Remember well the expiring stranger's words !

CHORUS.

Sad one ! I pity thy foreboded fate.

CASSANDRA.

Yet once more would I speak in sober speech,
Or ere I utter mine own funeral wail.
And thee do I conjure, all-seeing Sun !
Gazing up thy light for the last time ;
Even fate as terrible, as dire as this,
May my avengers on my murderers wreak ;
On both the murderers of a dying slave,
An easy victim in their mastering hand !
Oh, our poor mortal state ! the happiest
A shadow turns to grief — the unfortunate !
A wet sponge with one touch washes all out
The picture : far more pitiable these.

[Enters the palace.]

CHORUS.

Of the gifts that from good fortune fall
Insatiate still are mortals all ;
At whom all fingers point, the great —
Who warns men from his palace gate,
And says, “ Thou mayst not enter here ; ” —
To him, the monarch standing near,

Did the blest gods the boon bestow,
 Old Priam's city to o'erthrow.
 Of all the gods we saw him come
 Most honored to his native home.
 But if the forfeit he repays,
 For the foul crimes of ancient days,
 And vengeance for the olden dead
 Be heaped on his devoted head ;
 What mortal would not make his prayer
 That he were born beneath a lowlier star ?

AGAMEMNON (*within*).

Woe's me, I'm stabbed ! stabbed with a mortal
 blow !

CHORUS.

Silence ! who is he that's shouting — stricken by a
 mortal stroke ?

AGAMEMNON.

Woe's me ! woe's me ! again ! another blow !

CHORUS.

From the groaning of the monarch seems it that the
 deed is done.

CHORUS.

Let us join in instant counsel what were safest to
 be done.

.

[The scene opens, disclosing Clytemnestra standing by the
 dead body of Agamemnon.]

CLYTEMNESTRA.

'T was I that slew him !

Thus, thus, I did it — naught will I deny —

That he could nor defend himself, nor 'scape.

As round the fish the inextricable net

Closes, in his rich garments' fatal wealth

I wrapped him. Then once, twice, I smote him
home.Twice groaned he, then stretched out his failing
limbs ;

And as he lay I added a third blow ;

And unto Hades, the dark god below,

Warden of the dead, made my thanksgiving vow.

So, fallen thus, he breathed out his proud life.¹

.

CHORUS.

Alas ! alas !

My king ! my king ! how shall I mourn for thee ?

How my fond heart speak all its agony ?

There liest thou ; thy cold corpse around

The subtle spider's web is wound ;

Thy noble life thou didst outbreathe

By a most impious and unholy death.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

And dar'st thou say the deed was mine ?

Ill does thy erring speech divine.

Say not 't was Agamemnon's wife

That cut so short his fated life.

¹ Compare the account of his death in the *Odyssey*, as told by himself. See page 81.

It was the Alastor, whose dread mien
Took up the likeness of the queen.
Of that dark house 't was he, 't was he,
The curse and awful Destiny ;
(Where, father of that race unblest,
Old Atreus held his cannibal feast ;)
Wreaking for that dread crime the vengeance due,
The full-grown man for those poor babes he slew.

SEMICHORUS.

Who shall absolve thee from the guilt
Of that red blood so foully spilt ?
How, how the Alastor wouldst thou name,
Accomplice in that deed of shame ?
Ancient hereditary foe
Of all that house of guilt and woe,
(Borne on the overwhelming flood,
Rushing amain, of kindred blood
Like clashing tides of meeting water,)
Burst Ares forth, black god of slaughter ;
On speeds he furious, o'er the rest,
Melting the congealed gore of the child-devouring
feast.

CHORUS.

Alas ! alas ! how shall I mourn for thee ?
How my fond heart speak all its agony ?
There liest thou ; thy cold corpse around
The subtle spider's web is wound ;
Thy noble life thou didst outbreathe
By a most impious and unholy death.

Milman.

CHOËPHORI,¹ 20-83.

THE CHORUS MOURN THE FATE OF AGA-
MEMNON.

OBEDIENT to my Queen's command,
With pure libations in my hand,
The regal halls I leave :
The shredded robe, the oft-dealt blow,
The bleeding cheek, whose furrows show
The handy-work of frantic woe,
Bear witness how I grieve.
Torn is the linen vest,
That veiled my snowy breast ;
And smiles around my lips no longer play ;
My heart, with care oppressed,
Is fed on agony from day to day.
A cry the calm of midnight broke ;
From the dark chambers Terror spoke ;
Troubler of sleep ! — with ghastly stare,
With breath of wrath, and bristling hair,
And accent shrill that pierced the ear,
Loud raved the dream-inspiring Seer !
Right heavily he sate, I ween,
Above the chambers of the Queen.
The interpreters, their troth who plight
To spell the visions of the night,
From God an answer gave :
" Sent forth by murdered man," they said,
" That form, to haunt the murderer's bed,
Had issued from the grave."

¹ Libation-Bearers. See Note. -

The impious Queen in vain these offerings sends,
To turn aside the ill that boding dream portends.

Earth! her graceless gifts I pour thee!
Earth, my mother! I adore thee:
Yet scarce my tongue thy power may dare
To mock with ineffectual prayer:
Can aught remove the murderer's guilt?
Can aught atone for life-blood spilt?
Halls, o'erwhelmed in ruin rude!
Hearth, where countless sorrows brood!
Round you, now my lord is slain,
Sunless, hateful shadows reign;
Loyal Faith that once possessed
Every listening subject's breast,
Faith, whose firmness seemed to mock
War and foul sedition's shock,
Hath passed away; — the cravens bow
Their necks beneath usurpers now.
Man to success still court will pay,
Still honor Fortune's fickle sway,
Exalt her to the blest abodes,
A goddess and above the gods.

But Justice holds her equal scales
With ever-waking eye;
O'er some her vengeful might prevails,
When their life's sun is high;
On some her vigorous judgments light,
In that dread pause 'twixt day and night,
Life's closing twilight hour;
Round some, ere yet they meet their doom,

Is shed the silence of the tomb,
The eternal shadows lower ;
But soon as once the genial plain
Has drunk the life-blood of the slain,
Indelible the spots remain,
And aye for vengeance call,
Till racking pangs of piercing pain
Upon the guilty fall.
What balm for him shall potent prove,
Who breaks the ties of wedded love ?
And though all streams united gave
The treasures of their limpid wave,
To purify from gore ;
The hand, polluted once with blood,
Though washed in every silver flood,
Is foul for evermore !
Hard Fate is mine, since that dark day,
Which girt my home with war's array,
And bore me from my father's hall,
To pine afar, a captive thrall ;
Hard Fate ! to yield to Heaven's decree,
And what I am not, seem to be ;
Dissemble hatred, and control
The bitter workings of the soul ;
E'en to injustice feign consent ;
Detest the wrong, but not prevent :
Yet oft I veil my face, to weep
For those who unavengèd sleep ;
Oft for my slaughtered lord I mourn,
Chilled by the frost of grief, with secret anguish
torn !

Joseph Anstice.

THE EUMENIDES, 307-396.

SONG OF THE FURIES.

UP and lead the dance of Fate !
 Lift the song that mortals hate !
 Tell what rights are ours on earth,
 Over all of human birth.
 Swift of foot to avenge are we !

He whose hands are clean and pure,
 Naught our wrath to dread hath he ;
 Calm his cloudless days endure.

But the man that seeks to hide
 Like him,¹ his gore-bedewèd hands,
 Witnesses to them that died,
 The blood avengers at his side,
 The Furies' troop forever stands.

.

O'er our victim come begin !
 Come, the incantation sing,
 Frantic all and maddening,
 To the heart a brand of fire,
 The Furies' hymn,
 That which chains the senses dim,
 Tuneless to the gentle lyre,
 Withering the soul within.

.

The pride of all of human birth,
 All glorious in the eye of day,
 Dishonored slowly melts away,
 Trod down and trampled to the earth,

¹ Orestes.

Whene'er our dark-stoled troop advances,
 Whene'er our feet lead on the dismal dances.

.
 For light our footsteps are,
 And perfect is our might,
 Awful remembrancers of guilt and crime,
 Implacable to mortal prayer,
 Far from the gods, unhonored, and heaven's light,
 We hold our voiceless dwellings dread,
 All unapproached by living or by dead.

What mortal feels not awe,
 Nor trembles at our name,
 Hearing our fate-appointed power sublime,
 Fixed by the eternal law.
 For old our office, and our fame,
 Might never yet of its due honors fail,
 Though 'neath the earth our realm in unsunned
 regions pale.

Milman.

THE SEVEN AGAINST THEBES, 848-860.

LAMENT FOR THE TWO BROTHERS SLAIN BY
 EACH OTHER'S HAND.

Now do our eyes behold
 The tidings which were told :
 Twin fallen kings, twin perished hopes to mourn,
 The slayer, the slain,
 The entangled doom forlorn
 And ruinous end of twain.
 Say, is not sorrow, is not sorrow's sum

On home and hearthstone come ?
 Oh, waft with sighs the sail from shore,
 Oh, smite the bosom, cadencing the oar
 That rows beyond the rueful stream for aye
 To the far strand,
 The ship of souls, the dark,
 The unreturning bark
 Whereon light never falls nor foot of Day,
 Even to the bourne of all, to the unbeholden land.
A. E. Housman.

PROMETHEUS, 1-435.

PROMETHEUS BOUND TO THE ROCK.

Strength and Force appear with Hephæstus dragging in Prometheus. They chain him to the Crag. Then the Sea Nymphs come to listen to his Story.

STRENGTH.

WE reach the utmost limit of the earth,
 The Scythian track, the desert without man,
 And now, Hephæstus, thou must needs fulfill
 The mandate of our father, and with links
 Indissoluble of adamantine chains,
 Fasten against this beetling precipice
 This guilty god ! Because he filched away
 Thine own bright flower, the glory of plastic fire,
 And gifted mortals with it, — such a sin
 It doth behove he expiate to the gods,
 Learning to accept the empery of Zeus,
 And leave off his old trick of loving man.

HEPHÆSTUS.

O Strength and Force, for you our Zeus's will
 Presents a deed for doing. No more! — but I,
 I lack your daring, up this storm-rent chasm
 To fix with violent hands a kindred god,
 Howbeit necessity compels me so
 That I must dare it, — and our Zeus commands
 With a most inevitable word. Ho thou!
 High-thoughted son of Themis who is sage,
 Thee loath, I loath must rivet fast in chains
 Against this rocky height unclomb by man,
 Where never human voice nor face shall find
 Out thee who lov'st them! — and thy beauty's
 flower,
 Scorched in the sun's clear heat, shall fade away.
 Night shall come up with garniture of stars
 To comfort thee with shadow, and the sun
 Disperse with retracted beams the morning frosts;
 And through all changes, sense of present woe
 Shall vex thee sore, because with none of them
 There comes a hand to free. Such fruit is plucked
 From love of man! for in that thou, a god,
 Didst brave the wrath of gods and give away
 Undue respect for mortals; for that crime
 Thou art adjudged to guard this joyless rock,
 Erect, unslumbering, bending not the knee,
 And many a cry and unavailing moan
 To utter on the air! For Zeus is stern,
 And new-made kings are cruel.

.

PROMETHEUS (*alone*).

O holy Æther, and swift-wingèd Winds,
And River-wells, and laughter innumeros
Of yon Sea-waves ! Earth, mother of us all,
And all-viewing cyclic Sun, I cry on you ! —
Behold me, a god, what I endure from gods !

Behold with throe on throe,
How, wasted by this woe,
I wrestle down the myriad years of time !

Behold, how fast around me,
The new King of the happy ones sublime
Has flung the chain he forged, has shamed and
bound me !

Woe, woe, to-day's woe and the coming morrow's,
I cover with one groan ! And where is found me
A limit to these sorrows ?

And yet what word do I say ? I have foreknown
Clearly all things that should be — nothing done
Comes sudden to my soul — and I must bear
What is ordained with patience, being aware
Necessity doth front the universe
With an invincible gesture. Yet this curse,
Which strikes me now, I find it hard to brave
In silence or in speech. Because I gave
Honor to mortals, I have yoked my soul
To this compelling fate ! Because I stole
The secret fount of fire, whose bubbles went
Over the ferrule's brim, and manward sent
Art's mighty means and perfect rudiment,
That sin I expiate in this agony ;
Hung here in fetters, 'neath the blanching sky !

[*The Sea Nymphs draw near.*

Ah, ah me ! what a sound !

What a fragrance sweeps up from a pinion unseen
Of a god or a mortal, or nature between,
Sweeping up to this rock where the earth has her
bound,

To have sight of my pangs, or some guerdon obtain.
Lo ! a god in the anguish, a god in the chain !

The god Zeus hateth sore,

And his gods hate again,

As many as tread on his glorified floor,

Because I loved mortals, too much evermore !

Alas me ! what a murmur and motion I hear,

As of birds flying near !

And the air undersings

The light stroke of their wings —

And all life that approaches I wait for in fear.

CHORUS OF SEA NYMPHS.

Fear nothing ! our troop

Floats lovingly up

With a quick-oaring stroke

Of wings steered to the rock ;

Having softened the soul of our father below !

For the gales of swift-bearing have sent me a
sound,

And the clank of the iron, the malleted blow,

Smote down the profound

Of my caverns of old,

And struck the red light in a blush from my brow,

Till I sprang up unsandaled, in haste to behold,

And rushed forth on my chariot of wings mani-
fold.

PROMETHEUS.

Alas me ! Alas me !
Ye offspring of Tethys who bore at her breast
Many children ; and eke of Oceanus, — he
Coiling still around earth with perpetual unrest ;
Behold me and see
How transfixed with the fang
Of a fetter I hang
On the high jutting rocks of this fissure, and keep
An uncoveted watch o'er the world and the deep.

CHORUS.

I behold thee, Prometheus — yet now, yet now,
A terrible cloud whose rain is tears
Sweeps over mine eyes that witness how
Thy body appears
Hung awaste on the rocks by infrangible chains !
For new is the hand, new the rudder that steers
The ship of Olympus through surge and wind —
And of old things passed, no track is behind.

PROMETHEUS.

Under earth, under Hades,
Where the home of the shade is,
All into the deep, deep Tartarus,
I would he had hurled me adown !
I would he had plunged me, fastened thus
In the knotted chain with the savage clang,
All into the dark, where there should be none,
Neither god nor another, to laugh and see !
But now the winds sing through and shake
The hurtling chains wherein I hang —

And I, in my naked sorrows, make
Much mirth for my enemy.

.
Universal Sympathy with Prometheus.

CHORUS.

I moan thy fate, I moan for thee,
Prometheus ! From my eyes too tender,
Drop after drop incessantly,
The tears of my heart's pity render
My cheeks wet from their fountains free —
Because that Zeus, the stern and cold,
Whose law is taken from his breast,
Uplifts his sceptre manifest
Over the gods of old.

All the land is moaning
With a murmured plaint to-day !
All the mortal nations,
Having habitations
In the holy Asia,
Are a dirge intoning
For thine honor and thy brothers',
Once majestic beyond others
In the old belief —
Now are groaning in the groaning
Of thy deep-voiced grief.

Mourn the maids inhabitant
Of the Colchian land,
Who with white, calm bosoms, stand
In the battle's roar !

Mourn the Scythian tribes that haunt
The verge of earth, Mæotis' shore.

Yea! Arabia's battle crown,
And dwellers in the beetling town
Mount Caucasus sublimely nears —
An iron squadron, thundering down
With the sharp-prowed spears.

But one other before, have I seen to remain,
By invincible pain
Bound and vanquished — one Titan! — 't was
Atlas, who bears,
In a curse from the gods, by that strength of his own
Which he evermore wears,
The weight of the heaven on his shoulder alone,
While he sighs up the stars!
And the tides of the ocean wail bursting their bars —
Murmurs still the profound —
And black Hades roars up through the chasm of
the ground
And the fountains of pure-running rivers moan low
In a pathos of woe.

Mrs. Browning.

PROMETHEUS, 436-506.

BENEFITS CONFERRED ON MAN BY PROMETHEUS.

PROMETHEUS.

BESEECH you, think not I am silent thus
Through pride or scorn! I only gnaw my heart
With meditation, seeing myself so wronged,

For see — their honors to these new-made gods,
What other gave but I — and dealt them out
With distribution? Ay — but here I am dumb;
For here I should repeat your knowledge to you,
If I spake aught. List rather to the deeds
I did for mortals, — how, being fools before,
I made them wise and true in aim of soul.
And let me tell you — not as taunting men,
But teaching you the intention of my gifts;
How, first beholding, they beheld in vain,
And hearing, heard not, but like shapes in dreams
Mixed all things wildly down the tedious time,
Nor knew to build a house against the sun
With wicketed sides, nor any woodcraft knew,
But lived like silly ants, beneath the ground
In hollow caves unsunned. There came to them
No steadfast sign of winter, nor of spring
Flower-perfumed, nor of summer full of fruit,
But blindly and lawlessly they did all things,
Until I taught them how the stars do rise
And set in mystery; and devised for them
Number, the inducer of philosophies,
The synthesis of Letters, and, beside,
The artificer of all things, Memory,
That sweet Muse-mother. I was first to yoke
The servile beasts in couples, carrying
An heirdom of men's burdens on their backs!
I joined to chariots, steeds, that love the bit
They champ at — the chief pomp of golden ease!
And none but I originated ships,
The seaman's chariots, wandering on the brine
With linen wings! And I — oh, miserable!
Who did devise for mortals all these arts,

Have no device left now to save myself
From the woe I suffer.

CHORUS.

Most unseemly woe
Thou sufferest and dost stagger from the sense,
Bewildered ! Like a bad leech falling sick
Thou art faint at soul, and canst not find the drugs
Required to save thyself.

PROMETHEUS.

Hearken the rest,
And marvel further — what more arts and means
I did invent, — this, greatest ! if a man
Fell sick, there was no cure, nor esculent
Nor chrysm nor liquid, but for lack of drugs
Men pined and wasted, till I showed them all
Those mixtures of emollient remedies
Whereby they might be rescued from disease.
I fixed the various rules of mantic art,
Discerned the vision from the common dream,
Instructed them in vocal auguries
Hard to interpret, and defined as plain
The wayside omens, flights of crook-clawed birds,
Showed which are by their nature fortunate,
And which not so, and what the food of each,
And what the hates, affections, social needs,
Of all to one another, — taught what sign
Of visceral lightness, colored to a shade,
May charm the genial gods, and what fair spots
Commend the lung and liver. Burning so
The limbs encased in fat, and the long chine,
I led my mortals on to an art abstruse,

And cleared their eyes to the image in the fire,
 Erst filmed in dark. Enough said now of this.
 For the other helps of man hid underground,
 The iron and the brass, silver and gold,
 Can any dare affirm he found them out
 Before me? None, I know! Unless he choose
 To lie in his vaunt. In one word learn the whole;
 That all arts come to mortals from Prometheus.

Mrs. Browning.

PROMETHEUS, 887-906.

THE CHORUS MORALIZES UPON THE FATE OF IO.

STROPHE.

OH, wise was he, oh, wise was he,
 Who first within his spirit knew
 And with his tongue declared it true,
 That love comes best that comes unto
 The equal of degree!
 And that the poor and that the low
 Should seek no love from those above
 Whose souls are fluttered with the flow
 Of airs about their golden height,
 Or proud because they see arow
 Ancestral crowns of light!

ANTISTROPHE.

Oh, never, never, may ye, Fates,
 Behold me with your awful eyes
 Lift mine too fondly up the skies
 Where Zeus upon the purple waits! —
 Nor let me step too near — too near —
 To any suitor, bright from heaven!

Because I see — because I fear
 This loveless maiden ¹ vexed and laden
 By this fell curse of Here, driven
 On wanderings dread and drear !

EPODE.

Nay, grant an equal troth instead
 Of nuptial love to bind me by !
 It will not hurt — I shall not dread
 To meet it in reply.
 But let not love from those above
 Revert and fix me, as I said,
 With that inevitable Eye !
 I have no sword to fight that fight —
 I have no strength to tread that path —
 I know not if my nature hath
 The power to bear — I cannot see
 Whither, from Zeus's infinite,
 I have the power to flee.

Mrs. Browning.

PROMETHEUS, 1080-1093.

PROMETHEUS AMID HURRICANE AND EARTH-
 QUAKE UTTERS HIS LAST WORDS.

EARTH is rocking in space !
 And the thunders crash up with a roar upon roar,
 And the eddying lightnings flash fire in my face,
 And the whirlwinds are whirling the dust round
 and round, —
 And the blasts of the winds universal leap free

¹ Io, who has been telling to Prometheus the story of her misfortunes.

And blow each upon each, with a passion of sound,
And æther goes mingling in storm with the sea !
Such a curse on my head, in a manifest dread,
From the hand of your Zeus has been hurtled
along !

O my mother's fair glory ! O Æther, enringing
All eyes with the sweet common light of thy bringing,
Dost see how I suffer this wrong ?

Mrs. Browning.

THE PERSIANS, 384-432.

THE BATTLE OF SALAMIS.

THE night was passing, and the Grecian host
By no means sought to issue forth unseen.
But when indeed the day with her white steeds
Held all the earth, resplendent to behold,
First from the Greeks the loud-resounding din
Of song triumphant came ; and shrill at once
Echo responded from the island rock.
Then upon all barbarians terror fell,
Thus disappointed ; for not as for flight
The Hellenes sang the holy pæan then,
But setting forth to battle valiantly.
The bugle with its note inflamed them all ;
And straightway with the dip of plashing oars
They smote the deep sea water at command,
And quickly all were plainly to be seen.
Their right wing first in orderly array
Led on, and second all the armament
Followed them forth ; and meanwhile there was
heard
A mighty shout :

“Come, O ye sons of Greeks,
Make free your country, make your children free,
Your wives, and fanes of your ancestral gods,
And your sires’ tombs ! For all we now contend !”

And from our side the rush of Persian speech
Replied. No longer might the crisis wait.
At once ship smote on ship with brazen beak ;
A vessel of the Greeks began the attack,
Crushing the stem of a Phœnician ship.
Each on a different vessel turned his prow.
At first the current of the Persian host
Withstood ; but when within the strait the throng
Of ships was gathered, and they could not aid
Each other, but by their own brazen bows
Were struck, they shattered all our naval host.
The Grecian vessels not unskillfully
Were smiting round about ; the hulls of ships
Were overset ; the sea was hid from sight,
Covered with wreckage and the death of men ;
The reefs and headlands were with corpses filled,
And in disordered flight each ship was rowed,
As many as were of the Persian host.
But they, like tunnies or some shoal of fish,
With broken oars and fragments of the wrecks
Struck us and clove us ; and at once a cry
Of lamentation filled the briny sea,
Till the black darkness’ eye did rescue us.

The number of our griefs, not though ten days
I talked together, could I fully tell ;
But this know well, that never in one day
Perished so great a multitude of men.

William Cranston Lawton.

SOPHOCLES, 495-405 B. C.

CEDIPUS THE KING, 151-215.

PRAYER FOR DELIVERANCE FROM THE
PESTILENCE.

CHORUS.

LORD of the Pythian treasure,¹
What meaneth the word thou hast spoken ?
The strange and wondrous word,
Which Thebes hath heard,
Oh ! it hath shaken our hearts to a faltering measure !
A token, O Paian, a token !
What is thy boon to us ?
Shall it come soon to us,
Shall it be long e'er the circle bend
Full round to the fatal end ?
Answer us, daughter of Hope,
Voice born Immortal of golden Hope !

First therefore thou be entreated,
Divine unapproachable maiden,²
And Artemis with thee, our aid to be,
In the mid mart of our city majestic seated,
And Phœbus the archer death-laden !

¹ Apollo.

² Athene.

By your affinity
Helpfullest trinity,
Help us. And as in the time gone by
Ye have bowed to our plaintive cry,
Bowed to our misery sore :
So come to us now as ye came before.
Ah me ! it is a world, a world of woe,
Plague upon the height and plague below !
And they mow us with murderous glaive,
And never a shield to save !
Never a fruit of the earth comes to the birth,
And in vain, in vain
Is the cry and the labor of mothers, and all for a
fruitless pain.

Away, away,
Ghost upon ghost they are wafted away :
One with another they die,
Swifter than flame do they fly
From life, from light, from day.

Ah me ! it is a world, a world of dead,
Feverous and foul, with corpses spread :
And they lie as they lie, unbefriended.
Where are the mothers, and where are the wives ?
They are fled, fled for their lives,
To the altars to pray,
There to lie, to sigh,
And to pray, and to pray unattended,
With choir and cry
Lamentation and litany blended.
And only, O Maiden, by thee may our marred
estate be mended.

The fiend of plague, whose swordless hand
 Burns like battle through the land,
 With wild tempestuous wailing all about him, —
 O cross his track and turn him back
 O meet him, thou, and rout him !
 Let him sink again
 Deep in the deepest main !
 Let him mingle in horrible motion
 With the wildest ocean !
 (For still what 'scapes the cruel night,
 Cruel day destroys it quite.)
 But oh ! with thunder-stroke
 Let our enemy and thine be broke, —
 O Zeus ! —
 Father ! — let him know thy wrath, thy wrath di-
 vine !

O God of light, from lightsome bow
 Cast abroad thy fiery snow,
 Like morsels cast thine arrowy, fiery snow !
 And thou, O mountain maiden pure,
 His sister, stand our champion sure,
 Stand and strow
 Arrows, as fire, below !
 Thou too — thou art Theban — O Bacchus,
 Thou — art thou not Theban ? — O Bacchus,
 In rosy bloom, elate and strong,
 Lead thy madding train along,
 Until thy fiery chase
 Hunt the demon from the place
 Afar, afar !
 O follow, follow him far, afar !

A. W. Verrall.

ŒDIPUS THE KING, 863-910.

THE HOLINESS OF LAW.

CHORUS.

MINE be it, mine to hold,
With destiny to aid, the stainless sanctity
In words and actions manifold,
Whereof the laws do live and move on high,
Set in eternal spheres,
Born in the bright expanse of upper sky,
Birth of the high God, not of mortal years,
Nor unto dull oblivion a prey :
Strong, ageless deity is theirs, and waneth not
away.

The child of earthly pride
Is tyranny, when once man's life doth teem
With wealth too great to profit or beseem.
Up, by a path untried,
Up to the crowning peak of bliss
She climbs, then headlong down the sheer abyss
Helpless she sinks to the unfooted void !
Yet unto God I pray that he may ne'er annul
Man's strife that man's estate be honored to the
full.
God is my help ; to him my faith clings unde-
stroyed.

But if a man, in deed or word,
Walks o'er-informed with pride and might,

By fear of justice undeterred,
 Scorning the seats of deity,
 Ill doom, to that man drawing nigh,
 His ill-starred arrogance requite !
 Unless toward his proper gain
 With uncorrupted hand he strain,
 Unless he loathe all filthiness —
 If with lewd hands he touch the grace of holi-
 ness !
 Henceforth, if such things be, no mortal evermore
 Can from his life repel
 The darts of heaven and boast that foiled they
 fell :
 If he who walks such ways
 Deserve man's honor and his praise,
 Wherefore with holy dance should I the Gods
 adore ?

Never again from Delphi's central hearth,
 The sacred spot inviolate of earth,
 Will I seek Phœbus' grace,
 Nor unto Abæ nor Olympia go,
 Unless these presages come forth,
 Clear, to the issue joined, for all to see and show.
 But unto thee we pray,
 Zeus, lord and king ! if so men call on thee aright —
 Deathless thou art, eternal, full of sway —
 Let not transgression 'scape thy sight !
 Wrecks of a bygone day,
 The ancient oracles of Laius' line
 Are cast contemned away !

No more is glorified Apollo's shrine ;
 Death falls on things divine.

E. D. A. Morshead.

ŒDIPUS THE KING, 1458-1480.

THE BLIND ŒDIPUS AND HIS CHILDREN.

ŒDIPUS.

FOR my fate, let it pass ! My children, Creon !
 My sons — nay, they the bitter wants of life
 May master ; they are men ! My girls — my
 darlings —

Why, never sat I at my household board
 Without their blessed looks ; our very bread
 We brake together ; — thou 'lt be kind to them
 For my sake, Creon — and, (O latest prayer !)
 Let me but touch them — feel them with these
 hands,

And pour such sorrows as may speak farewell
 O'er ills that must be theirs ! By thy pure line —
 For thine is pure — do this, sweet prince. Me-
 thinks

I should not miss these eyes, could I but touch
 them.

What shall I say to move thee ?

Sobs ! — And do I,

Oh, do I hear my sweet ones ? Hast thou sent,

In mercy sent, my children to my arms ?

Speak — speak — I do not dream !

CREON.

They are thy children.
I would not shut thee from the dear delight
In the old time they gave thee.

ŒDIPUS.

Blessing on thee !
For this one mercy mayst thou find above
A kinder God than I have. Ye — where are ye ?
My children, come ! nearer and nearer yet.

E. Bulwer-Lytton.

ŒDIPUS THE KING, 1524-1530.

CHORUS MORALIZES ON THE FATE OF ŒDIPUS.

DWELLERS in our native Thebè, fix on Œdipus your
eyes,
Who resolved the dark enigma, noblest champion
and most wise.
Glorious, like a sun he mounted, envied of the
popular throng ;
Now he sinks in seas of anguish, plunged the lash-
ing waves among.
Therefore, with the old-world sages, waiting for the
final day,
I will call no mortal happy, while he holds his
house of clay,
Till without one pang of sorrow, all his hours have
passed away.

Lewis Campbell.

ŒDIPUS AT COLONUS, 1-116.

THE ARRIVAL AT THE SACRED GROVE.

The blind, outcast King, Œdipus, led by Antigone, is seen approaching Colonus, a Suburb of Athens, where He has been told by the Oracle that his Life should find its End.

ŒDIPUS.

CHILD of a blind old man, Antigone,
To what place have we come, whose city this?
Who will receive the wanderer Œdipus
But for to-day and with the scantiest gifts?
Little I ask, yet even less receive,
And find that little still sufficing me.
For suffering and Time, my long companion,
And my own noble soul teach me content.
But, child, see'st anywhere a resting place,
Or in the trodden way or sacred groves?
There lead and seat me down that we may ask
Where now we are. Being strangers, we must learn
From citizens, and what we hear perform.

ANTIGONE.

My father, woe-worn Œdipus, I see
A city crowned with towers not far away;
But this place sure is holy — all in bloom
With laurel, olive, vine — while nightingales
On crowding wing sing sweet within the groves.
Here bend thy limbs to this unpolished stone;
For thou hast journeyed far for an old man.

ŒDIPUS.

Well, seat me down and watch the blind man here.

ANTIGONE.

Long lapse of time hath taught this work to me.

ŒDIPUS.

Canst thou tell now the place that we have reached?

ANTIGONE.

Athens I recognize, but this place not.

ŒDIPUS.

Why, every wayfarer hath told us that.

ANTIGONE.

Well, shall I go and learn what place it is?

ŒDIPUS.

Yes, child, at least if 't is inhabited.

ANTIGONE.

But 't is inhabited. I need not go,
I think, for now I see this stranger near.

ŒDIPUS.

Is he advancing here in haste to us?

ANTIGONE.

He's close at hand. Whate'er thou hast to say
'T is now the time; speak, since the man is here.

[*Enter an Athenian.*]

ŒDIPUS.

Stranger, since now I learn from this girl here,
Whose eyes must serve me as they serve herself,
That thou art timely come to clear our doubt —

ATHENIAN.

Before thou say'st more from this spot withdraw ;
The place whereon thou stand'st is holy ground.

ŒDIPUS.

What is this place, — to what god consecrate ?

ATHENIAN.

Untrodden, uninhabited. For here
The daughters dread of Earth and Darkness dwell.

ŒDIPUS.

Whose the dread name to call on in my prayer ?

ATHENIAN.

The all-seeing Eumenides the people here
Do call them. Elsewhere other names they have.

ŒDIPUS.

O that they might receive me, suppliant, now,
That I no more go forth from this their seat.

ATHENIAN.

What say'st thou ?

ŒDIPUS.

'T is the watchword of my fate.

ATHENIAN.

Well, I lack courage too to send thee forth
Till I inform the city what I do.

ŒDIPUS.

Now stranger, by the gods do not disdain
To answer me, poor wanderer, what I ask.

ATHENIAN.

Speak, and thou shalt not meet disdain from me.

ŒDIPUS.

Well, what the place to which we now have come ?

ATHENIAN.

All that I know myself thou now shalt hear.
This place is holy, all. Poseidon here
Revered doth reign. Here, too, who brought us
fire,
Titan Prometheus, and the place thou tread'st
Is called the land's brass-paven threshold, defense
Of Athens. But the neighboring fields
The knight Colonus claim for patron kind,
And bear his name — the equal right of all.
Such is the story, stranger, — no mere words. —
But we with presence of the gods are blest.

ŒDIPUS.

Why, are there dwellers in these regions here ?

ATHENIAN.

Most sure, and from this god receive their name.

ŒDIPUS.

Is one then ruler, or do the people sway ?

ATHENIAN.

The king in yonder city bears the rule.

ŒDIPUS.

And who is he that rules in word and deed ?

ATHENIAN.

Theseus his name, the son of Ægeus born.

ŒDIPUS.

And could some one to him our message bear ?

ATHENIAN.

To say aught to him or to bring him here ?

ŒDIPUS.

That, helping little, he may win great gain.

ATHENIAN.

What gain from one whose eyes no longer see ?

ŒDIPUS.

The words we speak shall have the gift of sight.

ATHENIAN.

Know'st thou, O stranger, how thou shalt not fail —
Thou noble-seeming one, despite thy woe ? —
Bide here, where thou art now, the while I go
And to our people — not the city folk —

Report all this ; for they shall judge for thee
Whether thou mayst remain or hence depart.

[*Athenian goes.*]

ŒDIPUS.

Daughter, is now the stranger gone from hence ?

ANTIGONE.

He's gone, dear father, so that all in peace
Thou now mayst speak, since I alone am here.

ŒDIPUS.

Reverèd powers, of aspect dread, since now
To your seats in this land I first have bent
My steps, be not ungracious to me here —
Nor yet to Phœbus, who all my ills foretold ;
But told me I should meet, in lapse of time,
This respite when to a land I came, my goal,
Where I should find the seat of gods revered
And greeting kind — here, too, my woe-worn life
Should turn its course and my sojourn be fraught
With gain to those who welcomed me, but those
Who drove me forth should aye accursèd be.
Signs, too, of this he promised me should come —
Earthquake, or thunder peal, or lightning flash
From Zeus. So now I know it needs must be
That omen true from you hath led me on,
Through all my journey, to this grove of yours.
Else on my way I never should have come
To you — I, fasting, you the foes of wine —
Nor sat me down upon this hallowed seat
Unhewn. But grant to me, ye goddesses, —
All with Apollo's oracle in accord, —
End and accomplishment of this my life ;

Unless to you I all unworthy seem,
 I, ever slave to mortals' utmost woe.
 Come then, sweet daughters of primeval Dark;
 Come, O thou Athens, from great Pallas called,
 Fairest of cities all. To Œdipus —
 His wretched semblance rather — pity show;
 For this is not that frame of other days.

ANTIGONE.

Be silent now, for venerable men
 Approach to ask why thou art sitting here.

ŒDIPUS.

I will keep silent. But now lead me forth
 From out the road and hide me in the grove,
 Until I learn their word. For knowledge shows
 Us how to do with caution what we do.

Appleton.

ŒDIPUS AT COLONUS, 668-719.

PRAISE OF COLONUS.

CHORUS.

STRANGER, thou art standing now
 On Colonus' sparry brow;
 All the haunts of Attic ground,
 Where the matchless coursers bound,
 Boast not, through their realms of bliss,
 Other spot as fair as this.
 Frequent down this greenwood dale,
 Mourns the warbling nightingale,
 Nestling 'mid the thickest screen
 Of the ivy's darksome green;
 Or where, each empurpled shoot

Drooping with its myriad fruit,
 Curled in many a mazy twine,
 Blooms the never-trodden vine,
 By the god's protecting power
 Safe from sun and storm and shower.
 Bacchus here, the summer long,
 Revels with the goddess throng,
 Nymphs who erst, on Nyssa's wild,
 Reared to man the rosy child.

Here Narcissus, day by day,
 Buds, in clustering beauty gay,
 Sipping aye, at morn and even,
 All the nectar dews of heaven,
 Wont amid your locks to shine,
 Ceres fair, and Proserpine.
 Here the golden Crocus gleams,
 Murmur here unfailing streams,
 Sleep the bubbling fountains never,
 Feeding pure Cephissus river,
 Whose prolific waters daily
 Bid the pastures blossom gayly,
 With the showers of spring-tide blending,
 On the lap of earth descending.
 Here the Nine, to notes of pleasure,
 Love to tread their choral measure,
 Venus, o'er those flowerets gliding,
 Oft her rein of gold is guiding.

Now a brighter boast than all
 Shall my grateful song recall ;
 Yon proud shrub, that will not smile,
 Pelops, on thy Doric isle,
 Nor on Asiatic soil,
 But unsown, unsought by toil,

Self-engendered, year by year,
Springs to life a native here.
Tree the trembling foeman shuns,
Garland for Athena's sons,
May the olive long be ours,
None may break its sacred bowers,
None its boughs of silvery gray
Young or old may bear away :
Morian Jove, with look of love,
Ever guards it from above,
Blue-eyed Pallas watch unsleeping
O'er her favorite tree is keeping.

Swell the song of praise again ;
Other boons demand my strain,
Other blessings we inherit,
Granted by the mighty Spirit ;
On the sea and on the shore,
Ours the bridle and the oar.
Son of Saturn old ! whose sway
Stormy winds and waves obey,
Thine be honor's well-earned meed,
Tamer of the champing steed :
First he wore on Attic plain
Bit of steel and curbing rein.
Oft too o'er the waters blue,
Athens, strain thy laboring crew ;
Practiced hands the bark are plying,
Oars are bending, spray is flying,
Sunny waves beneath them glancing,
Sportive Nereids round them dancing,
With their hundred feet in motion,
Twinkling 'mid the foam of ocean.

Anstice.

ŒDIPUS AT COLONUS, 1211-1248.

LONG LIFE NOT TO BE DESIRED.

CHORUS.

WHO, loving life, hath sought
 To outrun the appointed span,
 Shall be arraigned before my thought
 For an infatuate man.
 Since the added years entail
 Much that is bitter ; — joy
 Flies out of ken, desire doth fail,
 The wished-for moments cloy.
 But when the troublous life,
 Be it less or more, is past,
 With power to end the strife
 Comes rescuing Death at last.
 Lo ! the dark bridegroom waits ! No festal choir
 Shall grace his destined hour, no dance, no lyre !

Far best were ne'er to be ;
 But, once he hath seen the day,
 Next best by far for each to flee
 As swiftly as each may,
 Yonder from whence he came ;
 • For let but Youth be there
 With her light fooleries, who shall name
 The unnumbered brood of Care ?
 No trial spared, no fall !
 Feuds, battles, murders, rage,
 Envy, and last of all,
 Despised, dim, friendless age !

Ay, there all evils, crowded in one room,
Each at his worst of ill, augment the gloom.

Such lot is mine, and round this man of woe,
As some gray headland of a northward shore
Bears buffets of all wintry winds that blow,
Fresh storms of Fate are bursting evermore
In thunderous billows, borne
Some from the waning light,
Some through mid-noon, some from the rising morn,
Some from the stars of Night.

Lewis Campbell.

ANTIGONE, 583-625.

NO RESPITE FROM DIVINE WRATH.

CHORUS.

HIGH is their happiness whose life stands clear
From touch or taste of ill.
For them whose roof-tree rocks beneath the wrath
divine,
No respite is from fear ;
But curse on curse comes crowding on them
still —
Birth after birth, their generations pine.

As when, beneath the North Wind's stormy scourge
Of bitter blasts that blow from Thracian land,
Over the deep-sea darkness drives the surge,
From the dim gulf it stirs the dark and storm-vexed
sand,

And wave-worn headland and confronting shore
 Reverberate the roar ;
So see I woe on woe, ordained of old —
Woes of the living race, on woes of old time rolled,
 For all the line of Labdacus !
 No generation's blight
 Can sate the curse nor give back light
Where some dark power impends, with ruin
 fraught !
Awhile, light seemed to grow
 O'er thy last root, O house of Ædipus !
But the fell sickle of the gods below —
Wild words and frenzy of the mind distraught —
 Hews all away to naught.

Zeus ! by no sin of man the overbold
 Is thine high rule controlled :
 Not minished is thy strength sublime
By sleep, that preys on all, or tireless months of
 time !
Ageless in power, thy living royalty
Dwells in Olympian sheen, in gleaming halls of
 sky !
 This law of days long past
For the next hour and for all time stands fast —
 Who gaineth bliss or wealth too great,
 For him lurks evil fate.

Restless beguiling hope
For many men holds gladness in its scope,
But foils, for many, all they craved and sought
 In giddy pride of thought ;

Man knows not fate's approach, but onward fares,
 Till on the scorching fire his foot treads unawares.
 Wisely one spake this immemorial word —
The man whom God unto ill doom doth lead,
Sees and is blind, deems right the wrongful deed :
 And brief his date is, and his doom assured.

Morshead.

ANTIGONE, 781-800.

POWER OF LOVE.

CHORUS.

O LOVE, thou art victor in fight : thou mak'st all
 things afraid ;
 Thou couchest thee softly at night on the cheeks
 of a maid ;
 Thou passest the bounds of the sea, and the folds of
 the fields ;
 To thee the immortal, to thee the ephemeral yields ;
 Thou maddenest them that possess thee ; thou
 turnest astray
 The souls of the just, to oppress them, out of the
 way ;
 Thou hast kindled amongst us pride, and the quar-
 rel of kin ;
 Thou art lord, by the eyes of a bride, and the love-
 light therein ;
 Thou sittest assessor with Right ; her kingdom is
 thine,
 Who sports with invincible might, Aphrodita divine.

Sir George Young.

ANTIGONE, 806-896.

ANTIGONE GOES TO HER DEATH.

COME, fellow-citizens, and see
 The desolate Antigone,
 On the last path her steps shall tread,
 Set forth, the journey of the dead :
 Watching, with vainly-lingering gaze,
 Her last, last sun's expiring rays ;
 Never to see it, never more !
 For down to Acheron's dread shore
 A living victim am I led
 To Hades' universal bed.
 To my dark lot no bridal joys
 Belong, nor e'er the jocund noise
 Of hymenean chant shall sound for me ;
 But Death, cold Death my only spouse shall be.

.

Ah me ! and am I laughed to scorn ?
 Oh ! by my country's gods I pray,
 Why mock ye me, not yet to burial borne,
 But living in the light of day ?

 Thou city, hear my call !
 And ye the city's wealthy burghers all !
 Alas ! sweet Dirce's fountain stream,
 And Thebes's grove, where the bright chariots
 gleam,
 Bear witness to my dreary lot —

How, by my treacherous friends unwept, forgot,
I go, obedient to my doom,
To the dark dungeon of this new-heaped tomb !
O miserable me !
Nor with the living nor the dead to be !
But in lone banishment to lie,
Where man may neither live, nor yet may die.
Unmourned, unfriended, and unwed,
My dismal journey am I led :
No more may I behold the eye
Of that great holy lamp on high ;
And o'er my tearless grave shall moan
Of all my reckless friends not one.
O tomb ! O bridal chamber ! O deep-delved
And strongly guarded mansion ! I descend
To meet in your dread chambers all my kindred,
Who in dark multitudes have crowded down
Where Proserpine receives the dead. But I,
The last — and oh, how few more miserable ! —
Go down, or ere my sands of life are run.

Milman.

AJAX, 596-645.

LAMENT FOR THE AFFLICTION OF AJAX.¹

CHORUS.

ISLAND of glory ! whom the glowing eyes
Of all the wondering world immortalize,
Thou, Salamis, art planted evermore,
Happy amidst the wandering billows' roar ;
While I — ah, woe the while ! — this weary time,
By the green wold where flocks from Ida stray,

¹ See Note.

Lie worn with countless hours of wasted prime.
Hoping — ah, cheerless hope! — to win my way
Where Hades' horrid gloom shall hide me from
the day.

Aias is with me, yea, but crouching low,
Where Heaven-sent madness haunts his overthrow,
Beyond my cure or tendance: woeful plight!
Whom thou, erewhile, to head the impetuous fight,
Sent'st forth, thy conquering champion. Now he
feeds

His spirit on lone paths, and on us brings
Deep sorrow; and all his former peerless deeds
Of prowess drop like unremembered things
From Atreus' loveless brood, this caitiff brace of
kings.¹

Ah! when his mother, full of days and bowed
With hoary eld, shall hear his ruined mind,
How will she mourn aloud!
Not like the warbler of the dale,
The bird of piteous wail,
But in shrill strains far borne upon the wind,
While on the withered breast and thin white hair
Falls the resounding blow, the rending of despair.

Best hid in death were he whom madness drives
Without redress; if, through his father's race
Born to the noblest place
Among the war-worn Greeks, he lives
By his own light no more,

¹ Agamemnon and Menelaus.

Self-aliened from the self he knew before.
Oh, hapless sire, what woe thine ear shall wound !
One that of all thy line no life save this hath found.
Lewis Campbell.

AJAX, 646-692.

FAREWELL OF AJAX TO HIS COMRADES.

ALL strangest things the multitudinous years
Bring forth, and shadow from us all we know.
Falter alike great oath and steeled resolve ;
And none shall say of aught, " This may not be."
Lo ! I myself, but yesterday so strong
As new-dipt steel, am weak and all unsexed
By yonder woman : yea, I mourn for them,
Widow and orphan, left amid their foes.
But I will journey seaward — where the shore
Lies meadow-fringed — so haply wash away
My sin, and flee that wrath that weighs me down ;
And, lighting somewhere on an untrodden way,
I will bury this my sword, this hateful thing,
Deep in some earth-hole where no eye shall see.
Night and hell keep it in the under-world !
For never to this day, since first I grasped
The gift that Hector gave, my bitterest foe,
Have I reaped aught of honor from the Greeks.
So true that byword in the mouths of men,
" A foeman's gifts are no gifts, but a curse."

Wherefore henceforward shall I know that God
Is great ; and strive to honor Atreus' sons.
Princes they are, and should be obeyed. How else ?
Do not all terrible and most puissant things

Yet bow to loftier majesties ? The Winter,
Who walks forth scattering snows, gives place
anon

To fruitage-laden Summer ; and the orb
Of weary Night doth in her turn stand by,
And let shine out, with her white steeds, the
Day :

Stern tempest-blasts at last sing lullaby
To groaning seas : even the arch-tyrant, Sleep,
Doth loose his slaves, not hold them chained for-
ever.

And shall not mankind, too, learn discipline ?
I know, of late experience taught, that him
Who is my foe I must but hate as one
Whom I may yet call friend : and him who loves
me

Will I but serve and cherish as a man
Whose love is not abiding. Few be they
Who reaching friendship's port have there found
rest.

But, for these things they shall be well. Go
thou,

Lady, within, and there pray that the gods
May fill unto the full my heart's desire ;
And ye, my mates, do unto me with her
Like honor ; bid young Teucer, if he comes,
To care for me, but to be your friend still.
For where my way leads, thither must I go ;
Do ye my bidding ; haply ye may hear,
Though now is my dark hour, that I have peace.

C. S. Calverley.

AJAX, 845-865.

LAST WORDS OF AJAX.

AND thou that mak'st high heaven thy chariot-course,

O Sun, when gazing on my Fatherland,
Draw back thy golden rein, and tell my woes
To the old man, my father, and to her
Who nursed me at her bosom — my poor mother!
There will be wailing through the echoing walls
When — but away with thoughts like these! the
hour

Brings on the ripening deed. Death, death! look
on me —

Did I say Death? — it was a waste of words;
We shall be friends hereafter.

'T is the Day,
Present and breathing round me, and the car
Of the sweet sun, that never shall again
Receive my greeting! — Henceforth time is sunless,
And day a thing that is not! Beautiful Light,
My Salamis — my country, and the floor
Of my dear household-hearth; and thou, bright
Athens,

Thou — for thy sons and I were boys together —
Fountains and rivers, and ye Trojan plains,
I loved you as my fosterers — fare ye well!
Take in these words, the last earth hears from
Ajax —

All else unspoken; in a spectre-land
I'll whisper to the Dead.

Bulwer-Lytton.

ELECTRA, 709-763.

THE CHARIOT RACE.

THEY took their stand where the appointed judges
Had cast their lots and ranged the rival cars.

Rang out the brazen trump! Away they bound,
Cheer the hot steeds and shake the slackened reins;
As with a body the large space is filled

With the huge clangor of the rattling cars.

High whirl aloft the dust-clouds; blent together,
Each presses each and the lash rings; and loud
Snort the wild steeds, and from their fiery breath,
Along their manes and down the circling wheels
Scatter the flaking foam. Orestes still —

Aye, as he swept around the perilous pillar

Last in the course, wheeled in the rushing axle;

The left rein curbed, — that on the dexter hand

Flung loose. — So on erect the chariots rolled!

Sudden the Ænian's fierce and headlong steeds

Broke from the bit — and, as the seventh time now

The course was circled, on the Libyan car

Dashed their wild fronts: then order changed to
ruin:

Car crashed on car; the wide Crissæan plain

Was sea-like strewed with wrecks; the Athenian
saw,

Slackened his speed, and wheeling round the marge,

Unscathed and skillful, in the midmost space,

Left the wild tumult of that tossing storm.

Behind, Orestes, hitherto the last,

Had yet kept back his coursers for the close;

Now one sole rival left — on, on he flew,

And the sharp sound of the impelling scourge
 Rang in the keen ears of the flying steeds.
 He nears, he reaches — they are side by side —
 Now one — the other — by a length the victor.
 The courses all are past — the wheels erect —
 All safe — when, as the hurrying coursers round
 The fatal pillar dashed, the wretched boy
 Slackened the left rein : on the column's edge
 Crashed the frail axle : headlong from the car
 Caught and all meshed within the reins, he fell ;
 And masterless the mad steeds raged along !
 Loud from that mighty multitude arose
 A shriek — a shout ! But yesterday such deeds,
 To-day such doom ! Now whirled upon the earth,
 Now his limbs dashed aloft, they dragged him —
 those

Wild horses — till all gory from the wheels
 Released ; — and no man, not his nearest friends,
 Could in that mangled corpse have traced Orestes.
 They laid the body on the funeral-pyre ;
 And while we speak, the Phocian strangers bear,
 In a small, brazen, melancholy urn,
 That handful of cold ashes to which all
 The grandeur of the Beautiful hath shrunk.

Bulwer-Lytton.

FRAGMENTS FROM SOPHOCLES.

STRANGE THAT THE GODLESS PROSPER.

STRANGE is it that the godless, who have sprung
 From evil-doers, should fare prosperously,

While good men, born of noble stock, should be
By adverse fortune vexed. It was ill done
For the gods thus to order lives of men.
What ought to be is this, that godly souls
Should from the gods gain some clear recompense
And the unjust pay some clear penalty ;
So none would prosper who are base of soul.

E. H. Plumptre.

A FAIR EUBCEAN SHORE.

THERE stretcheth by the sea
A fair Eubœan shore, and o'er it creeps
The vine of Bacchos, each day's growth complete.
In morning brightness all the land is green
With tendrils fair and spreading. Noontide comes,
And then the unripe cluster forms apace :
The day declines, and purple grow the grapes ;
At eve the whole bright vintage is brought in,
And the mixed wine poured out.

Plumptre.

PROSPERITY UNCERTAIN.

WE should not speak of one who prospers well
As happy, till his life have run its course,
And reached its goal. An evil spirit's gift
In shortest time has oft laid low the state
Of one full rich in great prosperity,
When the change comes, and so the gods appoint.

Plumptre.

EURIPIDES, 480-406 B. C.

ALCESTIS, 435-475.

FAREWELL TO ALCESTIS.

[When the life of Admetus could be saved if some one would die in his stead, no one was found willing except his wife, Alcestis.]

DAUGHTER of Pelias, with farewell from me,
I' the house of Hades have thy unsunned home !
Let Hades know, the dark-haired deity, —
And he who sits to row and steer alike,
Old corpse-conductor, let him know he bears
Over the Acherontian lake this time,
I' the two-oared boat, the best, — oh, best by far
Of womankind ! For thee, Alkestis Queen,
Many a time those haunters of the Muse
Shall sing thee to the seven-stringèd mountain-shell,
And glorify in hymns that need no harp,
At Sparta when the cycle comes about,
And that Karneian month wherein the moon
Rises and never sets the whole night through :
So too at splendid and magnificent
Athenai. Such the spread of thy renown,
And such the lay that, dying, thou hast left
Singer and sayer. Oh that I availed
Of my own might to send thee once again
From Hades' hall, Kokutos' stream, by help
O' the oar that dips the river, back to-day !

Light from above thee, lady, fall the earth,
 Thou only one of womankind to die,
 Wife for her husband! If Admetos take
 Any thing to him like a second spouse, —
 Hate from his offspring and from us shall be
 His portion, let the king assure himself!
 No mind his mother had to hide in earth
 Her body for her son's sake, nor his sire
 Had heart to save whom he begot, — not they,
 The white-haired wretches! only thou it was,
 I' the bloom of youth, didst save him and so die!
 Might it be mine to chance on such a mate
 And partner! For there's penury in life
 Of such allowance: were she mine at least,
 So wonderful a wife, assuredly
 She would companion me throughout my days
 And never once bring sorrow!

Robert Browning.

ALCESTIS, 568-600.

THE HOSPITABLE HOUSE OF ADMETUS.

HARBOR of many a stranger, free to friend,
 Ever and always, O thou house o' the man
 We mourn for! Thee, Apollon's very self,
 The lyric Puthian, deigned inhabit once,
 Become a shepherd here in thy domains,
 And pipe adown the winding hillside paths,
 Pastoral marriage-poems to thy flocks
 At feed: while with them fed in fellowship,
 Through joy in the music, spot-skin lynxes; ay,
 And lions too, the bloody company,

Came, leaving Othrus' dell ; and round thy lyre,
 Phoibos, there danced the speckle-coated fawn,
 Pacing on lightsome fetlock past the pines
 Tress-topped, the creature's natural boundary,
 Into the open everywhere ; such heart
 Had she within her, beating joyous beats,
 At the sweet reassurance of thy song !
 Therefore the lot o' the master is to live
 In a home multitudinous with herds,
 Along by the fair-flowing Boibian lake,
 Limited, that ploughed land and pasture-plain,
 Only where stand the sun's steeds, stabled west
 I' the cloud, by that mid-air which makes the clime
 Of those Molossoi : and he rules as well
 O'er the Aigaian, up to Pelion's shore, —
 Sea-stretch without a port ! Such lord have we :
 And here he opens house now, as of old,
 Takes to the heart of it a guest again :
 Though moist the eyelid of the master, still
 Mourning his dear wife's body, dead but now !

Browning.

ALCESTIS, 962-1005.

THE STRENGTH OF FATE.

CHORUS.

IN heaven-high musings and many,
 Far-seeking and deep debate,
 Of strong things find I not any
 That is as the strength of Fate.
 Help nor healing is told
 In soothsayings uttered of old,

In the Thracian runes, the verses
 Engraven of Orpheus' pen ;
No balm of virtue to save
Apollo aforetime gave,
Who stayeth with tender mercies
 The plagues of the children of men.

She hath not her habitation
 In temples that hands have wrought ;
Him that bringeth oblation,
 Behold, she heedeth him naught.
Be thou not wroth with us more,
O mistress, than heretofore ;
For what God willeth soever,
 That thou bringest to be ;
Thou breakest in sunder the brand
Far forged in the Iron Land ;
Thine heart is cruel, and never
 Came pity anigh unto thee.

Thee, too, O King, hath she taken
 And bound in her tenfold chain ;
 Yet faint not, neither complain :
The dead thou wilt not awaken
 For all thy weeping again.
They perish, whom gods begot ;
The night releaseth them not.
Beloved was she that died
And dear shall ever abide,
For this was the queen among women, Admetus,
 that lay by thy side.

Not as the multitude lowly
 Asleep in their sepulchres,
 Not as their grave be hers,
 But like as the gods held holy,
 The worship of wayfarers.
 Yea, all that travel the way
 Far off shall see it and say,
Lo, erst for her lord she died,
To-day she sitteth enskied ;
Hail, lady, be gracious to usward ; that alway her
 honor abide.

Housman.

MEDEA, 627-662.

WARNING FROM THE EVIL FORTUNE OF MEDEA.

CHORUS.

WHEN fierce conflicting passions urge
 The breast where love is wont to glow,
 What mind can stem the stormy surge
 Which rolls the tide of human woe ?
 The hope of praise, the dread of shame,
 Can rouse the tortured breast no more ;
 The wild desire, the guilty flame,
 Absorbs each wish it felt before.

But if affection gently thrills
 The soul by purer dreams possessed,
 The pleasing balm of mortal ills
 In love can soothe the aching breast :
 If thus thou comest in disguise,
 Fair Venus ! from thy native heaven,

What heart unfeeling would despise
The sweetest boon the gods have given?

But never from thy golden bow
May I beneath the shaft expire!
Whose creeping venom, sure and slow,
Awakes an all-consuming fire:
Ye racking doubts! ye jealous fears!
With others wage internal war;
Repentance, source of future tears,
From me be ever distant far!

May no distracting thoughts destroy
The holy calm of sacred love!
May all the hours be winged with joy,
Which hover faithful hearts above!
Fair Venus! on thy myrtle shrine
May I with some fond lover sigh,
Whose heart may mingle pure with mine —
With me to live, with me to die!

My native soil! beloved before,
Now dearer as my peaceful home,
Ne'er may I quit thy rocky shore,
A hapless banished wretch to roam!
This very day, this very hour,
May I resign this fleeting breath!
Nor quit my silent humble bower;
A doom to me far worse than death.

Have I not heard the exile's sigh,
And seen the exile's silent tear,

Through distant climes condemned to fly,
A pensive weary wanderer here ?
Ah ! hapless dame ! no sire bewails,
No friend thy wretched fate deplores,
No kindred voice with rapture hails
Thy steps within a stranger's doors.

Perish the fiend whose iron heart,
To fair affection's truth unknown,
Bids her he fondly loved depart,
Unpitied, helpless, and alone :
Who ne'er unlocks with silver key
The milder treasures of his soul, —
May such a friend be far from me,
And ocean's storms between us roll !

Byron.

HIPPOLYTOS, 58-87.

HIPPOLYTOS WITH HIS HUNTSMEN SINGING TO
ARTEMIS.

HIPPOLYTOS.

COME, follow, and sing, as you follow,
Artemis, dwelling in heaven,
Daughter of Zeus, who protects us !

HUNTSMEN.

Lady ! O lady, most holy and pure ! Daughter of
Zeus !
Hail to thee, hail to thee, O thou virgin
Artemis, daughter of Leto and Zeus !
Loveliest art thou of maidens by far,

Who within the heavens wide
Dwellest within the paternal hall,
In the resplendent palace of Zeus !

HIPPOLYTOS.

Hail to thee, O loveliest,
Loveliest of maidens that dwell
In Olympus, Artemis !

[Placing a wreath upon the statue of Artemis.]

This garland, woven from the virgin mead,
O lady, I have shaped, and bring to thee, —
Where neither shepherd dares to graze his flock,
Nor yet has come the scythe, but in the spring
The honey-bee flits o'er the mead unshorn,
And Reverence keeps it fresh with river-dews.
They who, untaught, within their very souls
Have virtue, shown in all their deeds alike,
May cull therefrom ; the evil enter not.

But O dear lady, for thy golden hair
Receive a coronal from a reverent hand ;
For I alone of mortals have this right.
With thee I live, and answer thee in words,
Hearing thy voice, but seeing not thy face.
May I turn the goal of life as I began !

Lawton.

HIPPOLYTOS, 525-564.

CHORUS, CELEBRATING THE POWER OF LOVE.

LOVE, O Love, whose eyes with longing
Overflow, who sweet delight
Bringest to the soul thou stormest,

Come not, prithee, sorrow-laden,
Nor too mighty unto me !
Neither flaming fire is stronger,
Nor the splendor of the stars,
Than the shaft of Aphrodite,
Darting from the hands of Eros,
Who is child of Zeus supreme.

Vainly, vainly, by Alpheios,
Or in Phoibos' Pythian fane,
Hellas heaps the slaughtered oxen !
Eros, of mankind the tyrant,
Holder of the key that locks
Aphrodite's dearest chambers,
Is not honored in our prayers,
Though he comes as the destroyer,
Bringing uttermost disaster,
Unto mortals, when he comes.

That Oichalian virgin girl,
Never wedded nor a bride,
Kypris hurried far away,
Like a frenzied Bacchanal, —
In the midst of blood and smoke,
And with gory nuptial rites,
On Alcmene's son bestowed,
In her wedlock all unblest.

Thou, O holy wall of Thebes,
Well might tell, and Dirke's stream,
How to mortals Kypris comes.
For with thunder wrapt in fire

Bacchos' mother low she laid
Wedded to a fearful fate.
Terribly she breathes on all,
Even as a bee she flies.

Lawton.

HECUBA, 444-483.

SONG OF THE CAPTIVE TROJAN MAIDEN.

BREEZE, breeze of the sea,
Who the wave-passers bearest home
Swift and unwearied o'er the billows' foam,
 Ah! whither lead'st thou me
Grief-worn? whose house must have
This thing — a captured slave?

Or shall I reach a harbor strand
Dorian or Phthian, where they tell
Apidanos o'erstreams the land,
 Father of fairest founts that well?

Or else some island shore,
Urged, wretched, on my way with brine-splashed
 oar,
 To lead a life of weary sorrow there,
Where the first palm bare fruit,
Where the bay raised each sacred shoot
 To form a bower,
Leto's protection in her trial hour?

Or shall I, like Delian maiden,
 Sing of Artemis divine,

Golden-filleted, bow-laden ?
 Or at Pallas' sacred shrine
 The steeds to her fair chariot yoke
 To bear her, clad in saffron cloke,
 And braid the silken garments thin
 With saffron flowerets woven in ?

Or shall I sing the Titan brood,
 Whom Zeus, great Kronos' son,
 Poured twice-forged fire upon,
 And did to lasting sleep by that fell bolt and rude ?

Ah, sorrow for the young,
 For those whose life was long,
 For all the land,
 A heap of smoking ruin,
 Spear-pierced to her undoing
 By Argive hand !

And I shall be a slave
 Within a country not my own,
 Leaving the land that Europe has o'erthrown,
 'Scaping the chambers of the grave.

C. Kegan Paul.

HECUBA, 521-582.

THE SACRIFICE OF POLYXENA TO APPEASE THE SHADE OF ACHILLES.

THE whole vast concourse of the Achaian host
 Stood round the tomb to see your daughter die.
 Achilleus' son taking her by the hand,

Placed her upon the mound, and I stayed near ;
And youths, the flower of Greece, a chosen few,
With hands to check thy heifer, should she bound,
Attended. From a cup of carven gold,
Raised full of wine, Achilles' son poured forth
Libation to his sire, and bade me sound
Silence throughout the whole Achaian host.

I, standing there, cried in the midst these words :

“ Silence, Achaians ! let the host be still !

Hush, hold your voices ! ” Breathless stayed the
crowd ;

But he : “ O son of Peleus, father mine,
Take these libations pleasant to thy soul,
Draughts that allure the dead : come, drink the
black

Pure maiden's blood wherewith the host and I
Sue thee : be kindly to us, loose our prow,
And let our barks go free : give safe return
Homeward from Troy to all, and happy voyage.”
Such words he spake, and the crowd prayed assent.
Then from the scabbard, by its golden hilt,
He drew the sword, and to the chosen youths
Signaled that they should bring the maid ; but
she,

Knowing her hour was come, spake thus and said :

“ O men of Argos, who have sacked my town,
Lo, of free will I die ! let no man touch
My body : boldly will I stretch my throat.
Nay, but I pray you set me free, then slay ;
That free I thus may perish : 'mong the dead,
Being a queen, I blush to be called slave.”
The people shouted, and King Agamemnon

Bade the youths loose the maid and set her free :
She, when she heard the order of the chiefs,
Seizing her mantle, from the shoulder down
To the soft centre of her snowy waist
Tore it, and showed her breasts and bosom fair
As in a statue. Bending then with knee
On earth, she spake a speech most piteous :

“See you this breast, O youth? if breast you
will,

Strike it ; take heart : or if beneath my neck,
Lo ! here my throat is ready for your sword !”
He willing not, yet willing, pity-stirred
In sorrow for the maiden, with his blade
Severed the channels of her breath : blood flowed ;
And she, though dying, still had thought to fall
In seemly wise hiding what eyes should see not.
But when she breathed her life out from the
blow,

Then was the Argive host in divers way
Of service parted ; for some, bringing leaves,
Strewed them upon the corpse ; some piled a pyre,
Dragging pine trunks and boughs ; and he who
bore none,

Heard from the bearers many a bitter word :

“Standest thou, villain? Hast thou then no
robe,

No funeral honors for the maid to bring?
Will thou not go and get for her who died
Most nobly, bravest-souled, some gift?” Thus they
Spake of thy child in death, O thou most blest
Of women in thy daughter, most undone !

J. A. Symonds.

HECUBA, 905-952.

A TROJAN WIFE NARRATES THE FALL OF
TROY.

THOU, then, O natal Troy ! no more
The city of the unsacked shalt be,
So thick from dark Achaia's shore
The cloud of war hath covered thee.

Ah ! not again I tread thy plain —
The spear — the spear hath rent thy pride,
The flame hath scarred thee deep and wide ;
Thy coronal of towers is shorn,
And thou most piteous art — most naked and for-
lorn !

I perished at the noon of night !
When sleep had sealed each weary eye ;
When the dance was o'er, and harps no
more
Rang out in choral minstrelsy.
In the dear bower of delight
My husband slept in joy ;
His shield and spear suspended near,
Secure he slept : that sailor band
Full sure he deemed no more should stand
Beneath the walls of Troy.

And I too, by the taper's light,
Which in the golden mirror's haze
Flashed its interminable rays,

Bound up the tresses of my hair,
That I Love's peaceful sleep might share.

I slept ; but, hark ! that war-shout dread,
Which rolling through the city spread ;
And this the cry, — “ When, Sons of Greece,
When shall the lingering leaguer cease ?
When will ye spoil Troy's watch-tower high,
And home return ? ” — I heard the cry,
And, starting from the genial bed,
Veiled, as a Doric maid, I fled,
And knelt, Diana, at thy holy fane,
A trembling suppliant — all in vain.

They led me to the sounding shore —
 Heavens ! as I passed the crowded way
 My bleeding lord before me lay —
I saw — I saw — and wept no more,
Till, as the homeward breezes bore
The bark returning o'er the sea,
My gaze, O Ilion, turned on thee !
Then, frantic, to the midnight air,
I cursed aloud the adulterous pair :
“ They plunged me deep in exile's woe ;
They laid my country low :
 Their love — no love ! but some dark spell,
 In vengeance breathed, by spirit fell.
Rise, hoary sea, in awful tide,
And overwhelm that vessel's guilty pride ;
Nor e'er, in high Mycenæ's hall,
Let Helen boast in peace of mighty Ilion's fall.”

J. T. Coleridge.

HELENA, 1451-1511.

HELEN'S RETURN TO GREECE.

CHORUS.

FAIR be thy speed, Sidonian ship !
Thine oars, familiar to the oarsman's grip,
Fall fast, and make the surges bound,
And lead along the dolphin train,
While all around
The winds forego to vex the main,
And the mariners hear
The sea-king's daughter calling clear,
"Now, sails to the breeze, fling out, fling out,
Now pull, strong arms, to the cheering shout ;
Speed royal Helen, away and away,
To Argos home, to the royal bay."

What sacred hour, what festal tide
Shall bring fair Helen to Eurotas' side ?
Say, shall the Spartan maidens dance
Before Leucippis then ? Or meet
That day perchance
At Pallas' gate ? Or shall they greet
Thee, lost so long,
With lost Hyacinthus' nightly song,
How Phœbus slew him with quoit far-flown,
And yearly the maidens with mourning atone ?
There is one of them, Helen, one fair of the fair,
Who will not be wife till her mother be there !

O for wings to fly
Where the flocks of fowl together

Quit the Afric sky,
 Late their refuge from the wintry weather !
 All the way with solemn sound
 Rings the leader's clarion cry
 O'er dewless deserts and glad harvest ground.
 We would bid them, as they go,
 Neck by neck against the cloud
 Racing nightly 'neath the stars,
 When Eurotas rolls below,
 Light and leave a message loud,
 How princely Menelaus, proud
 With conquest, cometh from the Dardan wars.

Come, eternal Pair,¹
 Come, Twin Brethren, from your heaven ascended ;
 Down the steep of air
 Drive, by many a starry glance attended !
 'Mid the waters white and blue,
 'Mid the rolling waves be there,
 And brotherly bring safe your sister through.
 Airs from heaven, serene and pure,
 Breathe upon her ; bless and speed ;
 Breathe away her cruel shame !
 Never her did Paris lure,
 Never won her (as they rede)
 Of Aphrodite for his meed,
 Nor thither led, where never yet she came !

Verrall.

¹ Castor and Pollux, brothers of Helen, set in the heavens as the constellation of the Twins and supposed to be propitious to mariners.

ORESTES, 132-315.

ELECTRA AND ORESTES.

[Orestes, having slain his mother to avenge her murder of his father, is hounded by the Furies. In the following scene he is sleeping and his sister Electra is watching by his bedside.]

ELECTRA.

HERE come my friends again with lamentations,
To join their wails with mine : They'll drive him
far
From placid slumber, and will waste mine eyes
With weeping when I see my brother mad.

[*To the Chorus.*]

O dearest maidens, tread with feet of wool ;
Come softly, make no rustling, raise no cry :
For though your kindness be right dear to me,
Yet to wake him will work me double mischief.

CHORUS.

Softly, softly ! let your tread
Fall upon the ground like snow !
Every sound be dumb and dead :
Breathe and speak in murmurs low !

ELECTRA.

Further from the couch, I pray you ; further yet,
and yet away !

CHORUS.

Even so, dear maid, you see that I obey.

ELECTRA.

Ah, my friend, speak softly, slowly,
Like the sighing of a rush.

CHORUS.

See I speak and answer lowly
With a stealthy smothered hush.

ELECTRA.

That is right : come hither now ; come boldly forward to my side ;
Come, and say what need hath brought you : for
at length with watching tried,
Lo, he sleeps, and on the pillow spreads his limbs
and tresses wide.

CHORUS.

How is he ? dear lady, say :
Let us hear your tale and know
Whether you have joy to-day,
Whether sorrow brings you low.

ELECTRA.

He is breathing still, but slightly groaning in his
sleep alway.

CHORUS.

Oh, poor man ! but tell us plainer what you say.

ELECTRA.

Hush ! or you will scare the pleasant
Sleep that to his eyelid brings
Brief oblivion of the present.

CHORUS.

Ah, thrice wretched race that springs
Burdened with the god-sent curses of abhorred
deeds!

ELECTRA.

Ah, me!

Guilty was the voice of Phœbus, when enthroned
for prophecy,
He decreed my mother's murder — mother mur-
dered guiltily!

CHORUS.

Look you, lady, on his bed,
How he gently stirs and sighs!

ELECTRA.

Woe is me! His sleep hath fled,
Frightened by your noisy cries!

CHORUS.

Nay, I thought he sleeping lay.

ELECTRA.

Hence, I bid you, hence away
From the bedside, from the house!
Cease your noise;
Subdue your voice;
Stay not here to trouble us!

CHORUS.

He is sleeping, and you rightly caution us.

ELECTRA.

Holy mother, mother Night !
Thou who sheddest sleep on every wearied wight !
Arise from Erebus, arise
With plummy pinions light :
Hover o'er the house of Atreus ; and upon our
aching eyes,
Wearied with woe,
With grief brought low,
Solace bring 'mid miseries.

[To the Chorus.]

Silence ! Hush ! what noise was this ?
Can you ne'er your tongue restrain,
And allow soft slumber's kiss
To refresh his fevered brain ?

CHORUS.

Tell me, lady, what the close
Of his grief is like to be ?

ELECTRA.

Death. Naught else will end his woes.
Lo, he fasts continually.

CHORUS.

Alas ! Alas ! his fate is sure.

ELECTRA.

By the promise to make pure
Hands a mother's lifeblood stained,
Phœbus brought
Woe, and wrought
All the grief that we have gained.

CHORUS.

Just it was to slay the slayer ; yet the deed with
crime was fraught.

ELECTRA.

Thou art dead : oh, thou art dead,
Mother, who didst bear me ! mother, who didst shed
A father's blood, and slay
The children of thy bed !
We are dying, we are dying, like the dead, and
weak as they :
For thou art gone,
And I am wan,
Weeping, sighing night and day !
Look upon me, friends, behold
How my withered life must run,
Childless, homeless, sad and cold,
Comfortless beneath the sun.

CHORUS.

Come hither, maid Electra, to the couch :
Lest haply he should breathe his life away
Unheded : I like not this deep dead languor.

ORESTES (*awaking*).

O soothing Sleep ! dear friend ! best nurse of sick-
ness !
How sweetly came you in my hour of need.
Blest Lethe of all woes, how wise you are,
How worthy of the prayers of wretched men !
Whence came I to this place ? How journeyed I ?
I cannot think : my former mind is vanished.

ELECTRA.

O dearest, how hath your sleep gladdened me !
Say, can I help to soothe or raise your body ?

ORESTES.

Yes, take me, take me : with your kind hands wipe
The foam of fever from my lips and eyes.

ELECTRA.

Sweet is this service to me ; I am glad
To soothe my brother with a sister's hand.

ORESTES.

Support me with your breast and fan my forehead ;
Brush the loose hair : I scarce can see for sickness.

ELECTRA.

Poor head ! How rough and tangled are the curls,
How haggard is your face with long neglect !

ORESTES.

Now lay me back upon the bed again :
When the fit leaves me, I am weak and helpless.

ELECTRA.

Yea ; and the couch is some relief in sickness,
A sorry friend, but one that must be borne with.

ORESTES.

Raise me once more upright, and turn my body ;
Sick men are hard to please through wayward
weakness.

ELECTRA.

How would you like to put your feet to earth?
'Tis long since you stood up; and change is
pleasant.

ORESTES.

True: for it gives a show of seeming health;
And shows are good, although there be no sub-
stance.

[*Orestes sits up.*]

ELECTRA.

Now listen to me, dearest brother mine,
While the dread Furies leave you space to think.

ORESTES.

What have you new to say? Good news will cheer
me;
But of what's bad I have enough already.

ELECTRA.

Menelaus is here, your father's brother:
His ships are safely moored in Nauplia.

ORESTES.

What! Has he come to end your woes and mine?
He is our kinsman and our father's debtor.

ELECTRA.

He has: and this is surety for my words —
Helen hath come with him from Troy, is here.

ORESTES.

If heaven had saved but him, he'd now be happier:
But with his wife, he brings a huge curse home.

ELECTRA.

Yea ; Tyndareus begat a brood of daughters
Marked out for obloquy, a shame through Hellas.

ORESTES.

Be you, then, other than the bad ; you can :
Make not fine speeches, but be rightly minded !

ELECTRA.

Ah me, my brother ! your eyes roll and tremble —
One moment sane, and now swift frenzy fires you !

ORESTES (*seeing the Furies again*).

Mother, I sue to thee : nay, mother, hound not
Those blood-faced, snake-encircled women on me !
There ! There ! See there — close by they bound
upon me !

ELECTRA.

Stay, wretched brother ; start not from the bed !
For naught you see of what seems clear and certain.

ORESTES.

O Phœbus ! They will slay me, those dog-faced
Fierce-eyed, infernal ministers, dread goddesses !

ELECTRA.

I will not leave you ! but with woven arms
Will stay you from the direful spasm-throes.

ORESTES.

Let go !

[*Hurling Electra from him.*]

Of my damned Furies thou art one,
That with thy grip wouldst hale me down to hell!

ELECTRA.

Ah, woe is me! what succor shall I find,
Seeing the very gods conspire against us?

ORESTES.

Give me my bow and arrows, Phœbus' gift,
Wherewith Apollo bade me fight the fiends,
If they should scare me with wild-eyed delirium.
Some god shall feel the fury of man's hand,
Unless ye vanish forth from out my sight!

[Addressing the phantoms.]

Hear ye not? See ye not the feathery wings
Of swift, sure-striking shafts, ready to flutter?
Ha! Ha!
Why linger here? Go, sweep with outspread pin-
ions
The windy sky! Hence, and complain of Phœbus!
Woe's me!

[Recovering his reason.]

Why waste I breath, wearying my lungs in vain?
Where am I? From my bed how leaped I —
when?

'Midmost the waves once more I see fair weather.
Sister, why weep you? Wherefore veil your head?
I blush to see you partner of my woe,
Blush that a girl should suffer in my sickness.
Nay, do not pine thus, bowed beneath my burden —
All mine; — you said but yea, 't was I who shed
Our mother's blood: but Loxias I blame,

Who urging me to most unholy deeds
Helped me with words, in act availed me nothing.
Yea, and I think my sire, if, face to face,
I asked him — is it right to slay my mother?
Would lengthen many prayers, beseeching me
Never to draw my sword on her who bare me,
Seeing he might not see the sun again,
And I am doomed to bear this weight of horrors. —
But now unveil your face again, dear sister,
And cease from weeping — even though we be
Ringed round with sorrows. When you see me
 downcast,

Soothe you my terror and my frenzied soul —
Soothe and caress me ; yea, and when you moan,
'T is mine to stay and comfort as I can :
For these kind services of friends are fair.
But, dear, sad sister, go into the house,
And give your watchful eyes to sleep and rest ;
Take food, and with fair water bathe yourself.
For think, if you should fail me, if by watching
You take some sickness, then we're lost : 't is you,
You only, are my help ; all else is vanished.

ELECTRA.

Not so. With you to die I choose, with you
To live : it is all one ; for if you perish,
What shall I do — a woman ? How shall I,
Brotherless, friendless, fatherless, alone,
Live on ? Nay, if you ask it, I will do
Your will : but, brother, rest you on your bed ;
Nor take the terror and the startling fear
For more than phantoms ; stay upon the couch.

For though one is not sick, and only seems,
Yet is this pain and weariness to mortals.

J. A. Symonds.

IPHIGENIA AT AULIS, 1036-1097.

THE WEDDING OF PELEUS AND THETIS.

MERRILY rose the bridal strain,
With the pipe of reed and the wild harp ringing,
With the Libyan flute, and the dancers' train,
And the bright-haired Muses singing.

On the turf elastic treading,
Up Pelion's steep with an airy bound
Their golden sandals they struck on the ground,
While the mighty gods were feasting round,
As they sped to Peleus' wedding.

They left Pieria's fountain,
On the leaf-crowned hill they stood,
They breathed their softest, sweetest lays
In the bride's and bridegroom's praise.

Reëchoed the Centaur's mountain,
Reëchoed Pelion's wood.

The golden goblets crowned the Page,
The Thunderer's darling boy,
In childhood's rosy age
Snatched from the plains of Troy.

Where on the silvery sand
The noontide sun was glancing,
The fifty Nereids, hand in hand,
Were in giddy circles dancing.

The Centaurs' tramp rang up the hill,
To feast with the gods they trooped in haste,
And at the board by Bacchus graced,
The purpling bowl to fill.
Grassy wreath and larch's bough
Twined around each shaggy brow.
Daughter of Nereus, loud to thee
Chaunted the maids of Thessaly.
Their song was of a child unborn,¹
Whose light should beam like summer morn,
Whose praise by the Delian seer was sung,
And hymned by Chiron's tuneful tongue.

“Thetis, mark thy warrior son,
Girt with many a Myrmidon,
Armed with spear and flaming brand,
Wasting Priam's ancient land.
He shall ne'er to foeman quail ;
He shall case his limbs in mail,
Casque, and greaves, and breastplate's fold,
All by Vulcan wrought of gold,
Moulded in the forge of heaven,
By his goddess-mother given.
His shall be a hero's name,
Godlike might, and deathless fame.”

Thus the gods propitious smiled
On Peleus and the ocean child ;
Lady ! not such nuptial wreath
Shall Argives bid thee wear,

¹ Achilles.

But with the flowers of death
Entwine thy clustering hair.

Anstice.

HERCULES FURENS, 637-672.

YOUTH AND AGE.

CHORUS.

YOUTH is a pleasant burthen to me ;
But age on my head, more heavily
Than the crags of Aitna, weighs and weighs,
And darkening cloaks the lids and intercepts the
rays.

Never be mine the preference
Of an Asian empire's wealth, nor yet
Of a house all gold, to youth, to youth
That's beauty, whatever the gods dispense !
Whether in wealth we joy, or fret
Paupers, — of all God's gifts most beautiful, in truth !

But miserable murderous age I hate !
Let it go to wreck, the waves adown,
Nor ever by rights plague tower or town
Where mortals bide, but still elate
With wings, on ether, precipitate,
Wander them round — nor wait !

But if the gods to man's degree,
Had wit and wisdom, they would bring
Mankind a twofold youth, to be
Their virtue's sign-mark, all should see,
In those with whom life's winter thus grew spring.

For when they died, into the sun once more
Would they have traversed twice life's race-course
o'er ;

While ignobility had simply run
Existence through, nor second life begun.
And so might we discern both bad and good
As surely as the starry multitude
Is numbered by the sailors, one and one.
But now the gods by no apparent line
Limit the worthy and the base define ;
Only a certain period rounds, and so
Brings man more wealth, — but youthful vigor, no !

Well ! I am not to pause
Mingling together — wine and wine in cup —
The Graces with the Muses up —
Most dulcet marriage : loosed from music's laws,
No life for me !
But where the wreaths abound, there ever may I
be !

And still, an aged bard, I shout Mnemosune —
Still chant of Herakles the triumph-chant,
Companioned by the seven-stringed tortoise-shell
And Libuan flute, and Bromios' self as well,
God of the grape, with man participant !
Nor yet will we arrest their glad advance —
The Muses who so long have led me forth to dance !
A paian — hymn the Delian girls indeed,
Weaving a beauteous measure in and out
His temple-gates, Latona's goodly seed ;
And paians — I too, these thy domes about,
From these gray cheeks, my king, will swan-like
shout —

Old songster ! Ay, in song it starts off brave —
 “ Zeus’ son is he ! ” and yet, such grace of birth
 Surpassing far, to man his labors gave
 Existence, one calm flow without a wave,
 Having destroyed the beasts, the terrors of the earth.

Robert Browning.

ION,¹ 153-180.

ION AND THE BIRDS.

BEHOLD ! behold !

Now they come, they quit the nest
 On Parnassus’ topmost crest.
 Hence ! away ! I warn ye all !
 Light not on our hallowed wall !
 From eave and cornice keep aloof,
 And from the golden gleaming roof !
 Herald of Jove ! of birds the king !
 Fierce of talon, strong of wing,
 Hence ! begone ! or thou shalt know
 The terrors of this deadly bow.
 Lo ! where rich the altar fumes,
 Soars yon swan on oary plumes.
 Hence, and quiver in thy flight
 Thy foot that gleams with purple light,
 Even though Phœbus’ harp rejoice
 To mingle with thy tuneful voice ;
 Far away thy white wings shake
 O’er the silver Delian lake.

¹ The *Ion* of Euripides is to me a charming play. The opening scene of the boy employed in scaring the birds from the temple of Apollo — a sort of young pagan Acolyth — is full of grace and fancy. — MILMAN.

Hence ! obey ! or end in blood
The music of thy sweet-voiced ode.

Away ! away ! another stoops !
Down his flagging pinion droops ;
Shall our marble eaves be hung
With straw nests for your callow young ?
Hence, or dread this twanging bow,
Hence, where Alpheus' waters flow.
Or the Isthmian groves among
Go and rear your nestling young.
Hence, nor dare pollute or stain
Phœbus' offerings, Phœbus' fane.
Yet I feel a sacred dread,
Lest your scattered plumes I shed ;
Holy birds ! 't is yours to show
Heaven's auguries to men below.

Milman.

TROADES, 308-340.

CASSANDRA'S WILD MARRIAGE-SONG.

A LIGHT ! a light ! rise up, be swift ;
I seize, I worship, and I lift
The bridal torches' festal rays,
Till all the burning fane 's ablaze !
Hymen ! Hymenæan king !
Look there ! look there ! what blessings wait
Upon the bridegroom's nuptial state !
And I, how blest, who proudly ride
Through Argos' streets, a queenly bride !
Go thou, my mother ! go !

With many a gushing tear
And frantic shriek of woe.-
Wail for thy sire, thy country dear!
I the while, in bridal glee,
Lift the glowing, glittering fire.
Hymen! Hymen! all to thee
Flames the torch and rings the lyre!
Bless, O Hecate, the rite;
Send thy soft and holy light
To the virgin's nuptial bed.
Lightly lift the airy tread!
Evan! Evan! dance along!
Holy are the dance and song.
Meetest they to celebrate
My father Priam's blissful fate.
Dance, O Phœbus, dance and sing!
Round thy laurel-shaded fane
Still I lead the priestess' train.
Hymen! Hymenæan king!
Dance, my mother, lift thy feet!
Here and there the cadence keep
With thy light and frolic step!
Sing the Hymenæan sweet,
With many a gladsome melody
And jocund nymph's exultant cry.
Beauteous-vested maids of Troy,
Sing my song of nuptial joy!
Sing the fated husband led
To my virgin bridal-bed.

Milman.

BACCHÆ, 862-911.

CHORUS OF BACCHANALS.

O WHEN, through the long night,
With fleet foot glancing white,
Shall I go dancing in my revelry,
My neck cast back, and bare
Unto the dewy air,
Like sportive fawn in the green meadow's glee?
Lo, in her fear she springs
Over the encircling rings,
Over the well-woven nets far off and fast;
While swift along her track
The huntsman cheers his pack,
With panting toil, and fiery storm-wind haste.
Where down the river-bank spreads the wide
meadow,
Rejoices she in the untrod solitude.
Couches at length beneath the silent shadow
Of the old hospitable wood.

What is wisest? what is fairest,
Of God's boons to man the rarest?
With the conscious conquering hand
Above the foeman's head to stand.
What is fairest still is dearest.

Slow come, but come at length,
In their majestic strength,
Faithful and true, the avenging deities:
And chastening human folly,
And the mad pride unholy,

Of those who to the Gods bow not their knees.
For hidden still and mute,
As glides their printless foot,
The impious on their winding path they hound.
For it is ill to know,
And it is ill to do,
Beyond the law's inexorable bound.
'T is but light cost, in his own power sublime,
To array the Godhead, whosoe'er he be ;
And Law is old, even as the oldest time,
Nature's own unrepealed decree.

What is wisest ? what is fairest,
Of God's boons to man the rarest ?
With the conscious conquering hand
Above the foeman's head to stand.
What is fairest still is rarest.

Who hath 'scaped the turbulent sea,
And reached the haven, happy he !
Happy he whose toils are o'er,
In the race of wealth and power !
This one here, and that one there,
Passes by, and everywhere
Still, expectant thousands over,
Thousand hopes are seen to hover.
Some to mortals end in bliss ;
Some have already fled away :
Happiness alone is his,
That happy is to-day.

Milman.

CYCLOPS, 41-81.

CHORUS OF SATYRS, DRIVING THEIR GOATS.

WHERE has he of race divine
 Wandered in the winding rocks ?
 Here the air is calm and fine
 For the father of the flocks ;
 Here the grass is soft and sweet,
 And the river-eddies meet
 In the trough beside the cave,
 Bright as in their fountain wave.
 Neither here, nor on the dew
 Of the lawny uplands feeding ?
 Oh, you come ! — a stone at you
 Will I throw to mend your breeding ;
 Get along, you hornèd thing,
 Wild, seditious, rambling !

.

An Iacchic melody
 To the golden Aphrodite
 Will I lift, as erst did I
 Seeking her and her delight
 With the Mænads, whose white feet
 To the music glance and fleet.
 Bacchus, O belovèd, where
 Shaking wide thy yellow hair,
 Wanderest thou alone, afar ?
 To the one-eyed Cyclops we,
 Who by right thy servants are,
 Minister in misery,

In these wretched goat-skins clad,
Far from thy delights and thee.

Shelley.

CYCLOPS, 511-520.

LOVE SONG.

CHORUS.

ONE with eyes the fairest
Cometh from his dwelling,
Some one loves thee, rarest,
Bright beyond my telling.
In thy grace thou shinest
Like some nymph divinest,
In her caverns dewy : —
All delights pursue thee,
Soon pied flowers, sweet-breathing,
Shall thy head be wreathing.

Shelley.

FRAGMENTS FROM EURIPIDES.

CHILDREN IN THE HOUSE.

LADY, the sun's light to our eyes is dear,
And fair the tranquil reaches of the sea,
And flowery earth in May, and bounding waters ;
And so right many fair things I might praise ;
Yet nothing is so radiant and so fair
As for souls childless, with desire sore-smitten,
To see the light of babes about the house.

RETRIBUTION.

THINK you that sins leap up to heaven aloft
On wings, and then that on Jove's red-leaved
tablets
Some one doth write them, and Jove looks at them
In judging mortals? Not the whole broad heaven,
If Jove should write our sins, would be enough,
Nor he suffice to punish them. But Justice
Is here, is somewhere near us; do but look.

HIGH BIRTH.

FOR mere high birth I have small meed of praise;
The good man in my sight is nobly born;
While he who is not righteous, though his sire
Than Zeus be loftier, seems to me but base.

NOBLE BLOOD.

I KNOW not how to think of noble blood:
For men of courage and of virtuous soul,
Though born of slaves, are far above vain titles.

THE NOBLY BORN.

Lo, in all places how the nobly born
Show their good breed and spirit by brave bearing!

A BRAVE MAN'S FATHERLAND.

THE whole wide ether is the eagle's way:
The whole earth is a brave man's fatherland.

J. A. Symonds.

ARISTOPHANES, 448-385 B. C.

THE BIRDS, 162-386.

IN BIRD-LAND.

The comedy of "The Birds" is an extravaganza. Two Athenians, Peisthetairus (Persuasive) and Euelpides (Hopeful), propose to seek a new home in the kingdom of the birds. They are kindly received by the king, Hoopoe (himself formerly a man), who calls together his subjects to hear the propositions of the strangers. In the ancient theatre the chorus, twenty-four in number, representing the birds, formed a fantastic spectacle, tricked out as they were in every variety of beak and plumage. They rush upon the stage, as described in the text, and at sight of their ancient enemy, man, are ready to hack in pieces the two intruders, until pacified by Hoopoe. In the following scenes of the play they finally accept the propositions of the Athenians and build a city in the air — Nephelococcygia (Cloud-cuckoo-town).

Peis. HAH! What a power is here; what opportunities!

If I could only advise you; I see it all!

The means for an infinite empire and command!

Hoo. And what would you have us do?

What's your advice?

Peis. Do! what would I have ye do? Why, first of all

Don't flutter and hurry about all open-mouthed

In that undignified way. With us for instance,

At home, we should cry out, "What creature's that?"

And Teleas would be the first to answer :

“ A mere poor creature, a weak restless animal,
A silly bird, that's neither here nor there.”

Hoo. Yes, Teleas might say so. *It would be like him.*

But tell me, what would you have us do ?

Peis. (*emphatically*). Concentrate ;

Bring all your birds together. Build a city.

Hoo. The Birds ! How could we build a city ?
Where ?

Peis. Nonsense. You can't be serious. What
a question !

Look down.

Hoo. I do.

Peis. Look up now.

Hoo. So I do.

Peis. Now turn your neck round.

Hoo. I should sprain it, though.

Peis. Come, what d' ye see ?

Hoo. The clouds and sky ; — that's all.

Peis. Well, that we call the pole and the atmosphere ;

And would it not serve you birds for a metropole ?

Hoo. Pole ? Is it called a pole ?

Peis. Yes, that's the name.

Philosophers of late call it the pole ;

Because it wheels and rolls itself about,

As it were, in a kind of a roly-poly way.

Well, there then, you may build and fortify,

And call it your metropolis, — your acropolis.

From that position you'll command mankind,

And keep them in utter thorough subjugation :

Just as you do the grasshoppers and locusts.

And if the gods offend you, you 'll blockade 'em,
And starve 'em to a surrender.

Hoo.

In what way?

Peis. Why thus. Your atmosphere is placed,
you see,

In a middle point, just betwixt earth and heaven.

A case of the same kind occurs with us.

Our people in Athens, if they send to Delphi
With deputations, offerings, or what not,
Are forced to obtain a pass from the Bœotians :
Thus when mankind on earth are sacrificing,
If you should find the gods grown mutinous
And insubordinate, you could intercept
All their supplies of sacrificial smoke.

Hoo. By the earth and all its springs ! springes
and nooses !

Odds, nets, and snares ! this is the cleverest notion :
And I could find it in my heart to venture,
If the other Birds agree to the proposal.

Peis. But who must state it to them ?

Hoo.

You yourself,

They 'll understand ye. I found them mere bar-
barians,

But living here a length of time amongst them,
I have taught them to converse and speak correctly.

Peis. How will you summon them ?

Hoo.

That 's easy enough ;

I 'll just step into the thicket here hard by,
And call my Nightingale. She 'll summon them.
And when they hear her voice, I promise you
You 'll see them all come running here pell-mell.

Peis. My dearest, best of Birds ! don't lose a
moment,

I beg, but go directly into the thicket ;
 Nay, don't stand here, go call your Nightingale.

[*Exit Hoopoe.*]

*Song from behind the Scene, supposed to be sung
 by the Hoopoe.*

Awake ! awake !

Sleep no more, my gentle mate !

With your tiny tawny bill,

Wake the tuneful echo shrill,

On vale or hill ;

Or in her airy rocky seat,

Let her listen and repeat

The tender ditty that ye tell,

The sad lament,

The dire event,

To luckless Itys that befell.

Thence the strain

Shall rise again,

And soar amain,

Up to the lofty palace gate,

Where mighty Apollo sits in state

In Jove's abode, with his ivory lyre,

Hymning aloud to the heavenly quire ;

While all the gods shall join with thee

In a celestial symphony.

[*A Solo on the Flute supposed to be the
 Nightingale's Call.*]

Peis. Oh, Jupiter ! the dear delicious bird !
 With what a lovely tone she swells and falls,
 Sweetening the wilderness with delicate air.

Eu. Hist !

Peis. What ?

Eu. Be quiet, can't ye ?

Peis. What's the matter ?

Eu. The Hoopoe is just preparing for a song.

Hoo. Hoop ! hoop !

Come in a troop,

Come at a call,

One and all,

Birds of a feather,

All together.

Birds of an humble gentle bill

Smooth and shrill,

Dieted on seeds and grain,

Rioting on the furrowed plain,

Pecking, hopping,

Picking, popping,

Among the barley newly sown.

Birds of bolder louder tone,

Lodging in the shrubs and bushes,

Mavises and Thrushes.

On the summer berries browsing,

On the garden fruits carousing,

All the grubs and vermin smouzing.

You that in an humbler station,

With an active occupation,

Haunt the lowly watery mead,

Warring against the native breed,

The gnats and flies, your enemies ;

In the level marshy plain

Of Marathon pursued and slain.

You that in a squadron driving
 From the seas are seen arriving,
 With the Cormorants and Mews
 Haste to land and hear the news!
 All the feathered airy nation,
 Birds of every size and station,
 Are convened in convocation.

For an envoy queer and shrewd
 Means to address the multitude,
 And submit to their decision
 A surprising proposition,
 For the welfare of the state.

Come in a flurry,
 With a hurry, scurry,
 Hurry to the meeting and attend to the debate.

[*The two Athenians stand aside, as the
 Chorus of Birds enter.*]

Eu. How they thicken, how they muster,
 How they clutter, how they cluster!
 Now they ramble here and thither,
 Now they scramble altogether.
 What a fidgeting and clattering!
 What a twittering and chattering!
 Don't they mean to threaten us? What think ye?

Peis. Yes, methinks they do.

Eu. They're gaping with an angry look against
 us both.

Peis. It's very true.

Cho. Where is He, the Magistrate that assembled us to deliberate?

Hoo. Friends and comrades, here am I, your
 old associate and ally.

Cho. What have ye to communicate for the benefit of the state ?

Hoo. A proposal safe and useful, practicable, profitable.

Two projectors are arrived here, politicians shrewd and able.

Cho. Whee ! whaw ! where ! where !

What ? what ? what ? what ? what ?

Hoo. I repeat it — human envoys are arrived, a steady pair,

To disclose without reserve a most stupendous huge affair.

Cho. Chief, of all that ever were, the worst, the most unhappy one !

Speak, explain !

Hoo. Don't be alarmed !

Cho. Alas, alas ! what have you done ?

Hoo. I've received a pair of strangers, who desire to settle here.

Cho. Have you risked so rash an act ?

Hoo. I've done it, and I persevere.

Cho. But where are they ?

Hoo. Near beside you ; near as I am ; very near.

Cho. Out, alas ! out, alas !

We are betrayed, cruelly betrayed
To a calamitous end.

Our comrade and our friend,

Our companion in the fields and in the pastures

Is the author of all our miseries and disasters,

Our ancient sacred laws and solemn oath !

Transgressing both !

Treasonably delivering us as a prize

To our horrible immemorial enemies.

To a detestable race
 Execrably base !

For the Bird our Chief, hereafter he must answer
 to the state ;

With respect to these intruders, I propose, without
 debate,

On the spot to tear and hack them.

Eu. There it is, our death and ruin !

Ah, the fault was all your own, you know it ; it
 was all your doing ;

You that brought me here, and why ?

Peis. Because I wanted an attendant.

Eu. Here to close my life in tears.

Peis. No, that 's a foolish fear, depend on 't.

Eu. Why a foolish fear ?

Peis. Consider ; when you're left without an
 eye,

It's impossible in nature ; how could you contrive
 to cry ?

Cho. Form in rank ; form in rank ;

Then move forward and outflank.

Let me see them overpowered,

Hacked, demolished, and devoured,

Neither earth, nor sea, nor sky,

Nor woody fastnesses on high,

Shall protect them if they fly.

Where 's the Captain ? what detains him ? what
 prevents us to proceed ?

On the right there, call the Captain ! let him form
 his troop and lead.

Eu. There it is ; where can I fly ?

Peis. Sirrah, be quiet ; wait a bit.

Eu. What, to be devoured amongst them !

Peis. Will your legs or will your wit
Serve to escape them?

Eu. I can't tell.

Peis. But I can tell; do as you're bid;
Fight we must. You see the pot just there before
ye; take the lid

And present it for a shield; the spit will serve you
for a spear;

With it you may scare them off, or spike them if
they venture near.

Eu. What can I find to guard my eyes?

Peis. Why, there's the very thing you wish,
Two vizard helmets ready made, the cullender and
skimming dish.

Eu. What a clever, capital, lucky device; sud-
den and new!

Nicias, with all his tactics, is a simpleton to you.

Cho. Steady, Birds! present your beaks! in
double time, charge and attack!

Pounce upon them, smash the pot lid, clapperclaw
them, tear and hack.

Hoo. Tell me, most unworthy creatures, scandal
of the feathered race,

Must I see my friends and kinsmen massacred
before my face?

Cho. What, do you propose to spare them?
Where will your forbearance cease,

Hesitating to destroy destructive creatures such as
these?

Hoo. Enemies they might have been; but here
they come, with fair design,

With proposals of advice, for your advantage and
for mine.

Cho. Enemies time out of mind ! they that
have spilt our fathers' blood,
How should they be friends of ours, or give us
counsel for our good ?

Hoo. Friendship is a poor adviser ; politicians
deep and wise
Many times are forced to learn a lesson from their
enemies ;
Diligent and wary conduct is the method soon or
late
Which an adversary teaches ; whilst a friend or
intimate
Trains us on to sloth and ease ; to ready confidence ;
to rest
In a careless acquiescence ; to believe and hope the
best.
Look on earth ! behold the nations, all in emulation
vying,
Active all, with busy science engineering, fortify-
ing ;
To defend their hearths and homes, with patriotic
industry,
Fencing every city round with massy walls of ma-
sonry ;
Tactical devices old they modify with new design ;
Arms offensive and defensive to perfection they
refine ;
Galleys are equipt and armed, and armies trained
to discipline.
Look to life, in every part, in all they practice, all
they know,
Every nation has derived its best instruction from
the foe.

Cho. We're agreed to grant a hearing; if an enemy can teach
Anything that's wise or useful, let him prove it in his speech.

Peis. (aside). Let's retire a pace or two; you see the change in their behavior.

Hoo. Simple justice I require, and I request it as a favor.

Cho. Faith and equity require it, and the nation hitherto
Never has refused to take direction and advice from you.

Frere.

THE BIRDS, 685-725.

CHORUS OF BIRDS.

YE Children of Man! whose life is a span,
Protracted with sorrow from day to day,
Naked and featherless, feeble and querulous,
Sickly calamitous creatures of clay!
Attend to the words of the Sovereign Birds,
(Immortal, illustrious, lords of the air),
Who survey from on high, with a merciful eye,
Your struggles of misery, labor, and care.
Whence you may learn and clearly discern
Such truths as attract your inquisitive turn;
Which is busied of late with a mighty debate,
A profound speculation about the creation,
And organical life, and chaotical strife,
With various notions of heavenly motions,
And rivers and oceans, and valleys and mountains,

And sources of fountains, and meteors on high,
 And stars in the sky . . . We propose by and by,
 (If you 'll listen and hear,) to make it all clear.
 And Prodicus henceforth shall pass for a dunce,
 When his doubts are explained and expounded at
 once.

.
 Our antiquity proved, it remains to be shown
 That Love is our author and master alone ;
 Like him we can ramble, and gambol and fly
 O'er ocean and earth, and aloft to the sky ;
 And all the world over, we 're friends to the lover,
 And when other means fail, we are found to prevail,
 When a Peacock or Pheasant is sent as a present.

All lessons of primary daily concern
 You have learnt from the Birds, and continue to
 learn,

Your best benefactors and early instructors ;
 We give you the warning of seasons returning.

When the Cranes are arranged, and muster afloat
 In the middle air, with a creaking note,
 Steering away to the Libyan sands,
 Then careful farmers sow their lands ;
 The crazy vessel is hauled ashore,
 The sail, the ropes, the rudder and oar
 Are all unshipped and housed in store.

The shepherd is warned, by the Kite reappearing,
 To muster his flock, and be ready for shearing.

You quit your old cloak at the Swallow's behest,
 In assurance of summer, and purchase a vest.

For Delphi, for Ammon, Dodona, in fine
 For every oracular temple and shrine,

The Birds are a substitute equal and fair,
 For on us you depend, and to us you repair
 For counsel and aid when a marriage is made,
 A purchase, a bargain, a venture in trade :
 Unlucky or lucky, whatever has struck ye,
 An ox or an ass that may happen to pass,
 A voice in the street, or a slave that you meet,
 A name or a word by chance overheard,
 If you deem it an omen, you call it a *Bird* ;
 And if birds are your omens, it clearly will follow
 That birds are a proper prophetic Apollo.

Frere.

THE FROGS, 180-276.

BACCHUS AND THE FROGS.

[In the scene here given Dionysus (Bacchus) attended by his slave Xanthias is on his way to the infernal regions upon a special mission. The god is required by Charon to take a hand at the oar, and is much annoyed in his passage over the infernal lake by the discordant croak of the frogs, who apparently take a delight in worrying him.]

CHARON. BACCHUS. XANTHIAS.

Ch. HOY ! Bear a hand, there — Heave ashore.

B. What's this ?

X. The lake it is — the place he told us of.

By Jove ! and there's the boat — and here's old
 Charon.

B. Well, Charon ! — Welcome, Charon ! —
 Welcome kindly !

Ch. Who wants the ferryman ? Anybody
 waiting

To remove from the sorrows of life ? A passage,
 anybody ?

To Lethe's wharf? — to Cerberus's Reach?

To Tartarus? — to Tænarus? — to Perdition?

B. Yes, I.

Ch. Get in then.

B. (*hesitatingly*). Tell me, where are you going?

To Perdition really? —

Ch. (*not sarcastically, but civilly, in the way of business*).

Yes, to oblige you, I will

With all my heart — Step in there.

B. Have a care!

Take care, good Charon! — Charon, have a care!

[*Bacchus gets into the boat.*]

Come, Xanthias, come!

Ch. I take no slaves aboard

Except they've volunteered for the naval victory.

X. I could not — I was suffering with sore eyes.

Ch. You must trudge away then, round by the end of the lake there.

X. And whereabouts shall I wait?

Ch. At the Stone of Repentance,

By the Slough of Despond beyond the Tribulations;

You understand me?

X. Yes, I understand you;

A lucky, promising direction, truly.

Ch. (*to Bac.*) Sit down at the oar — Come quick, if there's more coming!

(*To Bac. again*) Holloh! what's that you're doing?

[*Bacchus is seated in a buffoonish attitude on the side of the boat where the oar was fastened.*]

B. What you told me.
I'm sitting at the oar.

Sit *there*, I tell you,
You Fatguts ; that 's your place.

B. (*changes his place*). Well, so I do.

Ch. Now ply your hands and arms.

B. (makes a silly motion with his arms).
Well, so I do.

Ch. You'd best leave off your fooling. Take
to the oar,
And pull away.

B. But how shall I contrive?
I've never served on board—I'm only a lands-
man;

I'm quite unused to it —

Ch. We can manage it.
As soon as you begin you shall have some music
That will teach you to keep time.

B. What music's that?

Ch. A chorus of Frogs—uncommon musical Frogs.

B. Well, give me the word and the time.

Ch. Whooh up, up ; whooh up, up.

CHORUS OF FROGS.

Brékeke-késh, ko-ásh, ko-ásh,
 Shall the Choral Quiristers of the Marsh
 Be censured and rejected as hoarse and harsh ;
 And their Chromatic essays
 Deprived of praise ?
 No, let us raise afresh
 Our obstreperous Brékeke-késh ;

The customary croak and cry

Of the creatures

At the theatres,

In their yearly revelry.

Brékeke-késh, koásh, koásh.

B. (*rowing in great misery*).

How I 'm mauled,

How I 'm galled ;

Worn and mangled to a mash —

There they go ! “ *Koásh, koásh !* ”

Frogs. Brékeke-késh, koásh, koásh.

B. Oh, beshrew,

All your crew ;

You don't consider how I smart.

Frogs. Now for a sample of the Art !

Brékeke-késh, koásh, koásh.

B. I wish you hanged, with all my heart.

— Have you nothing else to say ?

“ *Brékeke-késh, koásh* ” all day !

Frogs. We 've a right,

We 've a right ;

And we croak at ye for spite.

We 've a right,

We 've a right ;

Day and night,

Day and night ;

Night and day,

Still to creak and croak away.

Phœbus and every Grace

Admire and approve of the croaking race ;

And the egregious guttural notes

That are gargled and warbled in their lyrical
throats.

Cease with your profane entreaties
All in vain forever striving :

Silence is against our natures.
With the vernal heat reviving,

Our aquatic crew repair
From their periodic sleep,
In the dark and chilly deep,
To the cheerful upper air ;
Then we frolic here and there
All amidst the meadows fair ;
Shady plants of asphodel,
Are the lodges where we dwell ;
Chaunting in the leafy bowers
All the livelong summer hours,
Till the sudden gusty showers
Send us headlong, helter-skelter,
To the pool to seek for shelter :
Meagre, eager, leaping, lunging,
From the sedgy wharfage plunging
To the tranquil depth below,
There we muster all a-row ;
Where, secure from toil and trouble,
With a tuneful hubble-bubble,
Our symphonious accents flow.
Brékeke-késh, koásh, koásh.

B. I forbid you to proceed.

Frogs. That would be severe indeed ;
Arbitrary, bold, and rash —
Brékeke-késh, koásh, koásh.

B. I command you to desist —
— Oh, my back, there ! oh, my wrist !
What a twist !
What a sprain !

- Frogs.* Once again —
 We renew the tuneful strain.
 Brékeke-késh, koásh, koásh.
- B.* I disdain — (Hang the pain !)
 All your nonsense, noise, and trash.
 Oh, my blister ! Oh, my sprain !
- Frogs.* Brékeke-késh, koásh, koásh.
 Friends and Frogs, we must display
 All our powers of voice to-day ;
 Suffer not this stranger here,
 With fastidious foreign ear,
 To confound us and abash.
 Brékeke-késh, koásh, koásh.
- B.* Well, my spirit is not broke.
 If it's only for the joke,
 I'll outdo you with a croak.
 Here it goes — (*very loud*) “ Koásh,
 koásh.”
- Frogs.* Now for a glorious croaking crash,
 (*still louder*)
 Brékeke-késh, koásh, koásh.”
- B.* (*splashing with his oar*).
 I'll disperse you with a splash.
- Frogs.* Brékeke-késh, koásh, koásh.
- B.* I'll subdue
 Your rebellious, noisy crew —
 — Have amongst you there, slap-dash.
 [*Strikes at them.*]
- Frogs.* Brékeke-késh, koásh, koásh.
 We defy your oar and you.

- Ch.* Hold ! We're ashore just — shift your
oar. Get out.
— Now pay for your fare.
B. There — there it is, the — twopence.
Frere.

THE FROGS, 440-460.

CHORUS OF THE "INITIATED."

SEMICHORUS.

Now we go to dance and sing
In the consecrated shades ;
Round the secret holy ring,
With the matrons and the maids.
Thither I must haste to bring
The mysterious early light ;
Which must witness every rite
Of the joyous, happy night.

SEMICHORUS.

Let us hasten — let us fly —
Where the lovely meadows lie ;
Where the living waters flow ;
Where the roses bloom and blow.
Heirs of immortality.
Segregated, safe and pure,
Easy, sorrowless, secure ;
Since our earthly course is run,
We behold a brighter sun.
Holy lives — a holy vow —
Such rewards await them now.

Frere.

THE CLOUDS, 275-313.

SONG OF THE CLOUDS.

CLOUD-MAIDENS that float on forever,
Dew-sprinkled, fleet bodies, and fair,
Let us rise from our Sire's loud river,
Great Ocean, and soar through the air
To the peaks of the pine-covered mountains where
the pines hang as tresses of hair.
Let us seek the watch towers undaunted,
Where the well-watered cornfields abound,
And through murmurs of rivers nymph-haunted,
The songs of the sea-waves resound ;
And the sun in the sky never wearies of spreading
his radiance around.

Let us cast off the haze
Of the mists from our band,
Till with far-seeing gaze
We may look on the land.

.

Cloud-maidens that bring the rain shower,
To the Pallas-loved land let us wing,
To the land of stout heroes and Power,
Where Kekrops was hero and king,
Where honor and silence is given
To the mysteries that none may declare,
Where are gifts to the high gods in heaven
When the house of the gods is laid bare,

Where are lofty roofed temples, and statues well
carven and fair ;

Where are feasts to the happy immortals
When the sacred procession draws near,

Where garlands make bright the bright portals
At all seasons and months in the year ;

And when spring days are here,
Then we tread to the wine-god a measure,

In Bacchanal dance and in pleasure,
'Mid the contests of sweet singing choirs,
And the crash of loud lyres.

Oscar Wilde.

THEOCRITUS, 270 B. C.

IDYL I., 29-63.

A CARVEN CUP.

ALL round its rim, on the top, there creeps a string
of ground ivy,
Twisted and tangled with woodbine, while here and
there, in the circle,
Tendrils curl and clasp — with bunches of berries
among them.
Outside a damsel is carved — so fair the gods
might have wrought her!
Neat and trim, with her mantle and net; and —
this hand and that hand —
Two youths, both long-haired, both comely, contend
for her favors
Angrily — never a jot cares my pretty jade for
their anger!
Sometimes she flings a smile to one, and frowns to
his fellow,
Sometimes she softens to t' other — and there they
stand in the beechwood,
Laughed at, but mad with love — half-teased, half-
pleased at the wanton.
Next a fisherman comes, cut out on a rock; and its
ledges

Jut up rough and stark — the old boy, done to a
marvel,
Staggers and sweats at his work — just like a fish-
erman hauling ;
Looking upon it you'd swear the work was alive
and no picture :
So do the veins knot up and swell in his neck and
his shoulders,
For, though he's wrinkled and gray, there's stuff
left yet in the ancient.
Next to this old sea-dog you see a vine, with its
branches
Heavy with globing grapes — a little lad sits by a
thicket
Guarding the grapes, but close at hand two foxes
come creeping,
One in the vineyard munches the clusters — one's
after the wallet ;
Gods ! you can see his scheme — he'll keep his eye
on the youngster,
Till he finds a chance, and leaves him dinnerless.
Blind one !
Why do you sit there, weaving with grasses a cage
for your crickets,
Plaiting the grasses, and wholly forgetting your
wallet and dinner,
Wholly forgetting your grapes — wrapped up in
those grasshopper engines ?
All the work in this cup's filled in with leaves of
acanthus ;
'Tis an Æolic thing — and sooth, of a wonderful
fancy ;

Sirs! it cost me to buy of the Calydon sailor, a big
cheese
Made of snow-white curds, and a she-goat into the
bargain;
Yet it has touched no lip, but lies this while in my
cottage.
See now! I mean it for you! 't is yours, if you
sing us that ditty
Half so well as you sang it before to the Himera
shepherds.
No thanks! do but sing! there's no more sunshine
nor singing
Under the grass — in the realm of the dead —
where all is forgotten!

Edwin Arnold.

IDYL XI., 7-64.

THE CYCLOPS IN LOVE.

AND so an easier life our Cyclops drew,
The ancient Polyphemus, who in youth,
Loved Galatea, while the manhood grew
Adown his cheeks and darkened round his mouth.
No jot he cared for apples, olives, roses;
Love made him mad: the whole world was
neglected;
The very sheep went backward to their closes
From out the fair green pastures, self-directed.
And singing Galatea, thus, he wore
The sunrise down along the weedy shore,
And pined alone, and felt the cruel wound
Beneath his heart, which Cypris' arrow bore,

With a deep pang ; but so the cure was found ;
And sitting on a lofty rock he cast
His eyes upon the sea, and sang at last ;
“ O whitest Galatea, can it be
That thou shouldst spurn me off who love thee
so ?

More white than curds, my girl, thou art to see,
More meek than lambs, more full of leaping glee
Than kids, and brighter than the early glow
On grapes that swell to ripen, sour like thee !
Thou comest to me with the fragrant sleep,
And with the fragrant sleep thou goest from
me ;

Thou fliest — fliest, as a frightened sheep
Flies the gray wolf ! yet Love did overcome me,
So long ; — I loved thee, maiden, first of all
When down the hills (my mother fast beside
thee)

I saw thee stray to pluck the summer-fall
Of hyacinth bells, and went myself to guide
thee :

And since my eyes have seen thee, they can leave
thee

No more, from that day's light ! But thou — by
Zeus,

Thou wilt not care for that to let it grieve thee !

I know thee, fair one, why thou springest loose
From my arm round thee. Why ? I tell thee,
Dear !

One shaggy eyebrow draws its smudging road
Straight through my ample front, from ear to
ear ;

One eye rolls underneath ; and yawning, broad,
Flat nostrils feel the bulging lips too near.

Yet — ho, ho ! — I, — whatever I appear,

Do feed a thousand oxen ! When I have done,
I milk the cows, and drink the milk that 's best !

I lack no cheese, while summer keeps the sun ;
And after, in the cold, it 's ready pressed !

And then I know to sing, as there is none
Of all the Cyclops can, — a song of thee,
Sweet apple of my soul, on love's fair tree,
And of myself who love thee — till the West
Forgets the light, and all but I have rest.
I feed for thee, besides, eleven fair does,

And all in fawn ; and four tame whelps of
bears.

Come to me, Sweet ! thou shalt have all of those

In change for love ! I will not halve the shares.
Leave the blue sea, with pure white arms extended

To the dry shore ; and in my cave's recess,
Thou shalt be gladder for the moonlight ended ;

For here be laurels, spiral cypresses,
Dark ivy, and a vine whose leaves enfold

Most luscious grapes ; and here is water cold,

The wooded *Ætna* pours down through the
trees

From the white snows, — which gods were scarce
too bold

To drink in turn with nectar. Who with these
Would choose the salt wave of the lukewarm
seas ?

Nay, look on me ! If I am hairy and rough,

I have an oak's heart in me ; there's a fire
In these gray ashes which burns hot enough ;

And when I burn for thee, I grudge the pyre
No fuel — not my soul, nor this one eye, —
Most precious thing I have, because thereby
I see thee, Fairest ! Out, alas ! I wish
My mother had borne me finned like a fish,
That I might plunge down in the ocean near
thee,

And kiss thy glittering hand between the weeds,
If still thy face were turned ; and I would bear
thee

Each lily white, and poppy fair that bleeds
Its red heart down its leaves ! one gift for hours
Of summer ; — one, for winter ; since to cheer
thee,

I could not bring at once all kinds of flowers.
Even now, girl, now, I fain would learn to swim,

If stranger in a ship sailed nigh, I wis,
That I may know how sweet a thing it is
To live down with you in the Deep and Dim !
Come up, O Galatea, from the ocean,

And having come, forget again to go !
As I, who sing out here my heart's emotion,
Could sit forever. Come up from below !

Mrs. Browning.

IDYL XV.

THE SYRACUSAN GOSSIPS;¹ OR, THE FEAST OF ADONIS.

GORG0, }
 PRAXINOË, } The Gossips.

EUNOË, servant of Praxinoë.

PHRYGLA, her housemaid.

LITTLE BOY, her son. Old Woman. Two Men.

Scene — Alexandria in Egypt.

Gorgo (at her friend's door). Praxinoë within?

*Eunoë. Why, Gorgo, dear,
 How late you are! Yes, she's within.*

*Prax. (appearing). What, no!
 And so you're come at last! A seat here, Eunoë;
 And set a cushion.*

Eunoë. There is one.

Prax. Sit down.

*Gorgo. Oh, what a thing's a spirit! Do you
 know,*

*I've scarcely got alive to you, Praxinoë?
 There's such a crowd — such heaps of carriages,
 And horses, and fine soldiers, all full dressed:
 And then you live such an immense way off!*

*Prax. Why, 't was his shabby doing. He would
 take*

¹ "This famous idyl describes the visit paid by two Syracusan women residing in Alexandria to the festival of the Resurrection of Adonis. Nothing can be more gay and natural than the chatter of the women, which has changed no more in two thousand years than the song of birds."—

ANDREW LANG.

This hole that he calls house, at the world's end.

'T was all to spite me, and to part us two.

Gorgo (speaking lower). Don't talk so of
your husband, there's a dear,

Before the little one. See how he looks at you.

Prax. (to the little boy). There, don't look
grave, child; cheer up, Zopy, sweet;

It is n't your papa we're talking of.

Gorgo (aside). He thinks it is, though.

Prax. Oh, no — nice papa!

(To Gorgo) Well, this strange body once (let us
say *once*,

And then he won't know who we're telling of),

Going to buy some washes and saltpetre,

Comes bringing salt! the great big simpleton!

Gorgo. And there's my precious ninny, Dio-
clede:

He gave for five old ragged fleeces, yesterday,

Ten drachmas! for mere dirt! trash upon trash!

But come; put on your things; button away,

Or we shall miss the show. It's the king's own;

And I am told the queen has made of it

A wonderful fine thing.

Prax. Ay, luck has luck.

Well, tell us all about it; for we hear

Nothing in this vile place.

Gorgo. We have n't time.

Workers can't throw away their holidays.

Prax. Some water, Eunoë; and then, my fine
one,

To take your rest again. Puss loves good lying.

Come; move, girl, move; some water — water
first.

Look how she brings it ! Now, then ; — hold, hold,
careless ;

Not quite so fast ; you 're wetting all my gown.

There ; that 'll do. Now, please the gods, I 'm
washed.

The key of the great chest — where 's that ? Go
fetch it.

[*Exit EUNOË.*

Gorgo. Praxinoë, that gown with the full skirts
Becomes you mightily. What did it cost you ?

Prax. Oh, don't remind me of it. More than
one

Or two good minas, besides time and trouble.

Gorgo. All which you had forgotten.

Prax. Ah, ha ! True ;

That 's good. You 're quite right.

(*Reënter EUNOË.*)

Come ; my cloak ; my cloak ;

And parasol. There — help it on now, properly.

(*To the little boy*) Child, child, you cannot go.

The horse will bite it ;

The Horrid Woman 's coming. Well, well, simple-
ton,

Cry, if you will ; but you must not get lamed.

Come, Gorgo. Phrygia, take the child, and play
with him ;

And call the dog indoors, and lock the gate.

[*They go out.*

Powers, what a crowd ! how shall we get along ?

Why, they 're like ants ! countless ! innumerable !

Well, Ptolemy, you 've done fine things, that 's
certain,

Since the gods took your father. No one nowa-
days

Does harm to travelers as they used to do,
After the Egyptian fashion, lying in wait, —
Masters of nothing but detestable tricks ;
And all alike, — a set of cheats and brawlers.
Gorgo, sweet friend, what will become of us ?
Here are the king's horse-guards ! Pray, my good
man,

Don't tread upon us so. See the bay horse !
Look how it rears ! It 's like a great mad dog.
How you stand, Eunoë ! It will throw him, cer-
tainly !

How lucky that I left the child at home !

Gorgo. Courage, Praxinoë : they have passed
us now ;

They 've gone into the court-yard.

Prax. Good ! I breathe again.

I never could abide in all my life

A horse and a cold snake.

Gorgo (*addressing an old woman*). From
court, mother ?

Old Woman. Yes, child.

Gorgo. Pray, is it easy to get in ?

Old Woman. The Greeks got into Troy. Every-
thing 's done

By trying.

[*Exit OLD WOMAN.*

Gorgo. Bless us ! How she bustles off !

Why, the old woman 's quite oracular.

But women must know everything ; even what Juno
Wore on her wedding-day. See now, Praxinoë,
How the gate 's crowded.

Prax. Frightfully indeed.

Give me your hand, dear Gorgo ; and do you

Hold fast of Eutycheis's, Eunoë.

Don't let her go ; don't stir an inch ; and so

We'll all squeeze in together. Stick close now.

Oh me ! oh me ! my veil's torn right in two !

Do take care, my good man, and mind my cloak.

Man. 'T was not my fault ; but I'll take care.

Prax. What heaps !

They drive like pigs !

Man. Courage, old girl ! all's safe.

Prax. Blessings upon you, sir, now and forever,
For taking care of us. A good, kind soul.

How Eunoë squeezes us ! Do, child, make way

For your own self. There ; now, we've all got in,

As the man said when he was put in prison.

Gorgo. Praxinoë, do look there ! What lovely
tapestry !

How fine and showy ! One would think the gods
did it.

Prax. Holy Minerva ! how those artists work !
How they do paint their pictures to the life !

The figures stand so like, and move so like !

They're quite alive, not worked. Well, certainly,

Man's a wise creature. See now — only look —

See — lying on the silver couch, all budding,

With the young down about his face ! Adonis !

Charming Adonis — charming even in Acheron !

Second Man. Do hold your tongues there ;
chatter, chatter, chatter.

The turtles stun one with their yawning gabble.

Gorgo. Hey-day ! Whence comes the man ?

What is't to you

If we do chatter? Speak where you've a right.
You're not the master here. And as for that,
Our people are from Corinth, like Bellerophon.
Our tongue's Peloponnesiac; and we hope
It's lawful for the Dorians to speak Doric!

Prax. We've but one master, by the Honey-sweet!¹

And don't fear you, nor all your empty blows.

Gorgo. Hush, hush, Praxinoë! there's the
Grecian girl,

A most amazing creature, going to sing
About Adonis; she that sings so well
The song of Sperchis: she'll sing something fine,
I warrant. See how sweetly she prepares!

The Song.

O Lady, who dost take delight
In Golgos and the Erycian height,
And in the Idalian dell,
Venus, ever amiable;
Lo, the long-expected Hours,
Slowest of the blessed powers,
Yet who bring us something ever,
Ceasing their soft dancing never,
Bring thee back thy beauteous one
From perennial Acheron.
Thou, they say, from earth hast given
Berenice place in heaven,
Dropping to her woman's heart
Ambrosia; and for this kind part,
Berenice's daughter — she
That's Helen-like — Arsinoë,

¹ An epithet applied by the Sicilians to Proserpine.

O thou many-named and shrined,
Is to thy Adonis kind.
He has all the fruits that now
Hang upon the timely bough :
He has green young garden-plots,
Basketed in silver pots ;
Syrian scents in alabaster,
And whate'er a curious taster
Could desire, that women make
With oil or honey, of meal cake ;
And all shapes of beast or bird,
In the woods by huntsman stirred ;
And a bower to shade his state
Heaped with dill, an amber weight ;
And about him Cupids flying,
Like young nightingales, that — trying
Their new wings — go half afraid,
Here and there, within the shade.
See the gold ! The ebony see !
And the eagles in ivory,
Bearing the young Trojan up
To be filler of Jove's cup ;
And the tapestry's purple heap,
Softer than the feel of sleep ;
Artists, contradict who can,
Samian or Milesian.
But another couch there is
For Adonis, close to his ;
Venus has it, and with joy
Clasps again her blooming boy
With a kiss that feels no fret,
For his lips are downy yet.
Happy with her love be she ;

But to-morrow morn will we
With our locks and garments flowing,
And our bosoms gently showing,
Come and take him in a throng,
To the sea-shore with this song : —
Go, beloved Adonis, go
Year by year thus to and fro ;
Only privileged demigod ;
There was no such open road
For Atrides ; nor the great
Ajax, chief infuriate ;
Nor for Hector, noblest once
Of his mother's twenty sons ;
Nor Patroclus, nor the boy
That returned from taken Troy ;
Nor those older buried bones,
Lapiths and Deucalions ;
Nor Pelopians, and their boldest ;
Nor Pelasgians, Greece's oldest.
Bless us then, Adonis dear,
And bring us joy another dear ;
Dearly hast thou come again,
And dearly shalt be welcomed then.

Gorgo. Well, if that's not a clever creature,
trust me !
Lord ! what a quantity of things she knows !
And what a charming voice ! 'T is time to go
though,
For there's my husband has n't had his dinner,
And you'd best come across him when he wants it !
Good-by, Adonis, darling. Come again.

Leigh Hunt.

IDYL XXVIII.

THE DISTAFF.¹

DISTAFF, thou greatest gift on man bestowed
 By fair Minerva as the chiefest good,
 Whom wise and thrifty women still retain,
 And raise their husband's fortune by their pain,
 Retire with me to Neleus' beauteous town,
 Where stately shrines grace Venus and her son ;
 For thither, distaff, I am now designed,
 And beg of mighty Jove a prosperous wind,
 To be enjoyed by, and enjoy my friend,
 Nicias, in whom the sweet-tongued Graces rest ;
 Learning itself is seated in his breast.
 There thou, of polished ivory framed, shalt prove
 A grateful present to his dearest love ;
 From thee shall all her husband's vests be spun,
 From thee she 'll often draw a flowery gown ;
 For lambs do lose their fleeces twice a year
 To fill her baskets, and be wrought by her.
 So painful is Theugenis, what the wise
 And thrifty matrons value, she will prize :
 Nor would I send thee to an idle place,
 Thou product of our country and our grace ;
 For thou wert made where walls stout Archias
 framed,

¹ " This little piece of Æolic verse accompanied the present of a distaff, which Theocritus brought from Syracuse to Theugenis, the wife of his friend Nicias, the physician of Miletus. On the margin of a translation by Longepierre, (the famous book-collector) Louis XIV. wrote that this idyl is a model of honorable gallantry." — ANDREW LANG.

The pride of Sicily, for valor famed :
Now thou shalt visit him whose wondrous skill
Can save the men that fate designs to kill,
Whose herbs can soon restore a life when lost,
And by his art bring back the flying ghost,
That fair Theugenis may by all be known
To have the neatest distaff in the town ;
And still of me, her friend, kind thoughts infuse,
Of me, the chiefest darling of the muse.
There some shall see thee, and these words repeat,
The present's small, but yet the kindness great ;
The giver's love doth little gifts commend,
And everything is valued from a friend.

Thomas Creech.

BION, 270 B. C.

IDYL I.

LAMENT FOR ADONIS.¹

I MOURN for Adonis — Adonis is dead !

Fair Adonis is dead, and the Loves are lamenting.

Sleep, Cypris, no more on thy purple-strewed bed !

Arise, wretch stoled in black, — beat thy breast
unrelenting,

And shriek to the worlds, “ Fair Adonis is dead.”

I mourn for Adonis — the Loves are lamenting.

He lies on the hills in his beauty and death, —
The white tusk of a boar has transfixed his white
thigh ;

Cytherea grows mad at his thin gasping breath,
While the black blood drips down on the pale
ivory,

And his eyeballs lie quenched with the weight
of his brows.

The rose fades from his lips, and upon them just
parted

¹ “ This poem was probably intended to be sung at one of the spring celebrations of the festival of Adonis, like that described by Theocritus in his 15th Idyl, *The Syracusan Gos-sips*.” — ANDREW LANG. See in this volume, page 278.

The kiss dies the goddess consents not to lose,
Though the kiss of the dead cannot make her glad-
hearted —

He knows not who kisses him dead in the dew.

I mourn for Adonis — the Loves are lamenting.

Deep, deep in the thigh, is Adonis's wound :
But a deeper is Cypris's bosom presenting —

The youth lieth dead while his dogs howl around,
And the nymphs weep aloud from the mists of the
hill,

And the poor Aphrodite, with tresses unbound,
All disheveled, unsandaled, shrieks mournful and
shrill

Through the dusk of the groves. The thorns
tearing her feet,
Gather up the red flower of her blood which is holy,
Each footstep she takes ; and the valleys repeat
The sharp cry she utters, and draw it out slowly.

She calls on her spouse, her Assyrian ; on him
Her own youth ; while the dark blood spreads over
his body —

The chest taking hue from the gash in the limb,
And the bosom once ivory, turning to ruddy.

Ah, ah, Cytherea ! the Loves are lamenting :

She lost her fair spouse, and so lost her fair
smile —

When he lived she was fair by the whole world's
consenting,

Whose fairness is dead with him ! woe worth the
while !

All the mountains above and the oak-lands below
Murmur, " Ah, ah, Adonis ! " The streams over-
flow
Aphrodite's deep wail — river-fountains in pity
Weep soft in the hills ; and the flowers as they
blow,
Redden outward with sorrow ; while all hear her go
With the song of her sadness through mountain
and city.

Ah, ah, Cytherea ! Adonis is dead !
Fair Adonis is dead — Echo answers, Adonis !
Who weeps not for Cypris, when bowing her head,
She stares at the wound where it gapes and
astories ? —
When, ah, ah ! — she saw how the blood ran away
And empurpled the thigh ; and, with wild hands
flung out,
Said with sobs, " Stay, Adonis ! unhappy one, stay,
Let me feel thee once more — let me ring thee
about
With the clasp of my arms, and press kiss into kiss !
Wait a little, Adonis, and kiss me again,
For the last time, beloved ; and but so much of this
That the kiss may learn life from the warmth of
the strain ! —
Till thy breath shall exude from thy soul to my
mouth,
To my heart ; and the love-charm I once more
receiving,
May drink thy love in it, and keep of a truth
That one kiss in the place of Adonis the living.

Thou fliest me, mournful one, fliest me far,

My Adonis, and seekest the Acheron portal, —
To Hell's cruel King goest down with a scar,

While I weep and live on like a wretched im-
mortal,

And follow no step ; — O Persephone, take him,

My husband ! thou 'rt better and brighter than I,
So all beauty flows down to thee ! I cannot make
him

Look up at my grief ; there's despair in my
cry,
Since I wail for Adonis, who died to me — died to
me —

Then I fear *thee* ! Art thou dead, my Adored ?
Passion ends like a dream in the sleep that's
denied to me.

Cypris is widowed : the Loves seek their lord
All the house through in vain ! Charm of cestus
has ceased

With thy clasp ! O too bold in the hunt, past
preventing ;
Ay, mad : thou so fair, to have strife with a beast !"
Thus the goddess wailed on — and the Loves are
lamenting.

Ah, ah, Cytherea ! Adonis is dead.

She wept tear after tear with the blood which was
shed ;

And both turned into flowers for the earth's gar-
den-close ;

Her tears to the wind-flower, his blood to the rose.

I mourn for Adonis — Adonis is dead,

 Weep no more in the woods, Cytherea, thy
 lover!

So, well; make a place for his corse in thy bed,

 With the purples thou sleepest in, under and
 over.

He's fair though a corse — a fair corse, like a
 sleeper —

 Lay him soft in the silks he had pleasure to fold,
When, beside thee at night, holy dreams deep and
 deeper

 Enclosed his young life on the couch made of
 gold!

Love him still, poor Adonis! cast on him together

 The crowns and the flowers! Since he died
 from the place,

Why let all die with him — let the blossoms go
 wither;

 Rain myrtles and olive-buds down on his face:

Rain the myrrh down, let all that is best fall
 a-pining,

 For the myrrh of his life from thy keeping is
 swept! —

Pale he lay, thine Adonis, in purples reclining, —

 The Loves raised their voices around him and
 wept.

They have shorn their bright curls off to cast on
 Adonis:

One treads on his bow, — on his arrows another, —

One breaks up a well-feathered quiver; and one is
 Bent low at a sandal, untying the strings;

 And one carries the vases of gold from the
 springs,

While one washes the wound; and behind them
a brother

Fans down on the body sweet air with his wings.

Cytherea herself now, the Loves are lamenting.

Each torch at the door Hymenæus blew out;
And the marriage-wreath dropping its leaves as
repenting,

No more "Hymen, Hymen," is chanted about,
But the *ai ai* instead — "ai alas" is begun

For Adonis, and then follows "ai Hymenæus!"
The Graces are weeping for Cinyris' son,

Sobbing low each to each, — "His fair eyes can-
not see us!"

Their wail strikes more shrill than the sadder
Dione's;

The fates mourn aloud for Adonis, Adonis,
Deep chanting! he hears not a word that they say:
He *would* hear, but Persephone has him in keep-
ing.

Cease moan, Cytherea — leave pomps for to-day,
And weep new when a new year refits thee for
weeping.

Mrs. Browning.

IDYL V.

THE TEACHER TAUGHT.

I DREAMT I saw great Venus by me stand,
Leading a nodding infant by the hand;
And that she said to me familiarly,
"Take Love, and teach him how to play to me."

She vanished then. And I, poor fool, must turn
To teach the boy, as if he wished to learn.
I taught him all the pastoral songs I knew
And used to sing; and I informed him too,
How Pan found out the pipe, Pallas the flute,
Phœbus the lyre, and Mercury the lute.
But not a jot for all my words cared he,
But lo! fell singing his love-songs to me;
And told me of the loves of gods and men,
And of his mother's doings; and so then
I forgot all I taught him for my part,
But what he taught me, I learnt all by heart.

Leigh Hunt.

MOSCHUS, 250 B. C.

IDYL I.

THE STRAY CUPID.

As Cupid from his mother Venus strayed,
Thus crying him aloud the goddess said,
“ If any one a wandering Cupid see,
The little fugitive belongs to me :
And if he tell what path the rogue pursues,
My kisses shall reward him for the news.
So plain, so numerous his marks, you ’ll own
That e’en among a score he may be known.

“ Bright clustering locks his lovely forehead grace,
But insolent expression marks his face ;
Though little are his hands, those hands can fling
Darts e’en to Acheron, the infernal king ;
Though bare his body, yet no art can find
A clue to trace the motions of his mind.
If you secure the wanderer, bring him bound,
Nor heed him, though he cry and stamp the
ground.”

E. Pockoe.

IDYL III., 106-111.

DEATH THE END.

ALAS! the meanest herb that scents the gale,
The lowliest flower that blossoms in the vale,
Even where it dies, at spring's sweet call renews
To second life its odors and its hues.
But we, but man, the great, the brave, the wise,
When once in death he seals his failing eyes,
In the mute earth imprisoned, dark and deep,
Sleeps the long, endless, unawakening sleep.

Milman.

IDYL V.

SEA AND SHORE.

WHEN gently skims the breeze the waters blue,
High swells my heart and kindles at the view ;
The dull unmoving land delights no more,
The halcyon calm allures me from the shore.
But when the hoary deeps resound, the waves
Are hung with foam, and all the ocean raves,
Home to the land I look and whispering trees,
And fly the smiling treachery of the seas.
Then the firm steadfast shore, the shadowy grove,
Where the pine sings in wildest winds I love.
Oh, hard the fisher's life ! the waves to reap ;
His house his bark ; his labors in the deep ;
The wandering fish his miserable gain.
Mine the sweet sleep beneath the broad-leaved
plane,

And mine the liquid fountain murmuring near,
That soothes, but ne'er disturbs the peasant's ear.

Milman.

IDYL VI.

LOVE'S LESSON.

PAN loved his neighbor Echo ; Echo loved
A gamesome Satyr ; he, by her unmoved,
Loved only Lyde ; thus through Echo, Pan,
Lyde, and Satyr, Love his circle ran.
Thus all, while their true lovers' hearts they
grieved,
Were scorned in turn, and what they gave received.
O all Love's scorers, learn this lesson true ;
Be kind to Love, that he be kind to you.

Ernest Myers.

IDYL IX.

THE CRAFT OF A KEEPER OF SHEEP.

WOULD that my father had taught me the craft of
a keeper of sheep,
For so in the shade of the elm-tree, or under the
rocks on the steep
Piping on reeds I had sat, and had lulled my sor-
row to sleep.

Myers.

APOLLONIUS RHODIUS, 194 B. C.

ARGONAUTICA.

MEDEA AT NIGHT.

'T WAS night, all earth in shadowy silence slept ;
Lone on the deck his watch the sailor kept,
And gazed, where shines Orion's belt on high,
Or the Great Bear bestrides the northern sky.
The traveler couched beside his weary way ;
Within his gate the drowsy warden lay.
Even by the couch where lay her infant dead,
The mother drooped her sleep-o'erburthened head.
No bay of dogs disturbed the silent street,
Mute the dull hum, the tramp of moving feet.
'T was darkness all, and voiceless silence deep ;
Still from Medea fled the balmy sleep.

So she her fatal treasured casket sought,
With life and death in powerful compound fraught.
She placed it on her knees ; the streams of woe
From her full eyes unchecked began to flow.
Long she bewailed her miserable state,
Then wildly seized the baleful drugs of fate.
Already hath she loosed the casket's band,
Sudden death's awful fear withholds her hand.
Then long she stood, to trembling doubt resigned,
And life's sweet cares came imaged to her mind.

She thought of all the joys of youth's glad years,
She thought of all her gentle maiden fears ;
The very sun appeared to shine more bright,
As each fond image kindled on her sight.

Milman.

MUSÆUS, 450 A. D.

HERO AND LEANDER.

THE FIRST INTERVIEW.

GAZED on the earth the maid, and could not speak,
And strove to hide the blushes on her cheek ;
And with her restless foot she beat the ground,
And closer drew her modest mantle round.
Sure omens all of love — for silence still,
Sweet rhetoric, speaks the maiden's yielding will.
At length, warm blushes purpling all her cheek,
To glad Leander she began to speak :
“ Stranger, thy words might surely melt the stone ;
Where hast thou learned that all-beguiling tone ?
Alas, who led thee to my native land ?

“ Yet idle all and vain thy words. . . .
In a tall tower my home, beside the sea,
With but one maid (my parents' harsh decree)
From Sestos' town afar, on the wild shore,
The only voice the ocean's booming roar.
Nor maiden friends approach my lone retreat,
Nor youthful choirs in jocund dances meet ;
But, morn and night, the same deep sullen sound
Comes echoing from the wave-lashed rocks around.”
She said, and seeming her own speech to blame,
Hid in her robe her face, which burned with shame.

Milman.

LEANDER PROMISES TO SWIM THE HELLES-
PONT.

SWEET, for thy love the watery way I'd cleave,
Though foam were fire, and waves with flame did
heave ;

I fear not billows if they bear to thee,
Nor tremble at the hissing of the sea ;
Do but one thing — set thine own lamp on high,
To shine at evening through the silent sky,
And I will be Love's ship, my pilot-star
That beam ; whereto oaring my way afar,
I shall not see Boötes, nor the Wain,
And bright Orion will be bright in vain.
Only take heed, dear, of the winds, and shield
The light, that when I toil, by waves concealed,
It be not quenched by any envious blast,
Lest I go down, a ship and venture lost.

Edwin Arnold.

FROM THE ANTHOLOGY.

ÆSOP.

LIFE.

O LIFE, what refuge have we fleeing thee,
Save in Death only? Infinite, in truth,
Thy sorrows are, and unendurable
As unavoidable. Doubtless there are
Some beauties and some charms in Nature's gift —
The earth, the stars, the sea, the moon, the sun,
But all the rest is only grief and fear.
And if perchance some happiness be there,
There too is Nemesis, who takes revenge.

Lilla Cabot Perry.

AGATHIAS.

VINTAGE SONG.

TREAD we thine infinite treasure, Iacchus, the vin-
tage sweet!
Weave we the Bacchic measure with paces of wil-
dering feet.
Down flows the vast clear stream, and the ivy-wood
bowls, as they float
O'er the surging nectar, seem each like a fairy
boat.

Close we stand as we drink and pledge in the glowing wine —

No warm Naiad, I think, need kiss in your cup or mine !

See, o'er the wine-press bending, the maiden Rose-flower beams,

Splendor of loveliness sending that dazzles the flood with its gleams.

Captive the hearts of us all ! straightway no man that is here

But is bound to Bacchus in thrall — to Paphia in bondage dear.

Cruel — for while at our feet he revels in bountiful rain,

Longing most fleet — most sweet — is all that she gives for our pain.

William M. Hardinge.

“LEAVE A KISS BUT IN THE CUP.”

I LOVE not wine, but shouldst thou wish
That I its slave might be,
Thou needest but to taste the cup,
Then hand it back to me.

For unto me that cup would bring
From thy dear lips a kiss,
And while I drank would softly tell
How it received such bliss.

Lilla Cabot Perry.

ANTIPATER.

LAMENT OVER CORINTH.

WHERE is thy splendor now, thy crown of towers,
 Thy beauty visible to all men's eyes,
 The gold and silver of thy treasuries,
 Thy temples of blest gods, thy woven bowers
 Where long-stoled ladies walked in tranquil hours,
 Thy multitudes like stars that crowd the skies?
 All, all are gone. Thy desolation lies
 Bare to the night. The elemental powers
 Resume their empire : on this lonely shore
 Thy deathless Nereids, daughters of the sea,
 Wailing 'mid broken stones unceasingly,
 Like halcyons when the restless south winds roar,
 Sing the sad story of thy woes of yore :
 These plunging waves are all that's left to thee.

J. A. Symonds.

ANTIPATER OF SIDON.

SAPPHO.

SAPPHO thou coverest, Æolian land !
 The Muse who died,
 Who with the deathless Muses, hand in hand,
 Sang, side by side !
 Sappho, at once of Cypris and of Love
 The child and care ;
 Sappho, that those immortal garlands wove
 For the Muses' hair !
 Sappho, the joy of Hellas, and thy crown.
 Ye Sisters dread,

Who spin for mortals from the distaff down
The threefold thread,
Why span ye not for her unending days,
Unsetting sun,
For her who wrought the imperishable lays
Of Helicon?

Andrew Lang.

TO ANACREON.

AROUND thy tomb, O bard divine!
Where soft thy hallowed brow reposes,
Long may the deathless ivy twine,
And summer pour his waste of roses!

And many a fount shall there distill,
And many a rill refresh the flowers;
But wine shall gush in every rill,
And every fount yield milky showers.

Thus, shade of him whom nature taught
To tune his lyre and soul to pleasure,
Who gave to love his warmest thought,
Who gave to love his fondest measure;

Thus, after death, if spirits feel,
Thou mayst, from odors round thee streaming,
A pulse of past enjoyment steal,
And live again in blissful dreaming.

Thomas Moore.

ASCLEPIADES.

TO HESIOD.

THE Muses, Hesiod, on the mountain steep,
Themselves at noon thy flocks beheld thee keep ;
The bright-leaved bay they plucked, and all the
Nine

Placed in thy hand at once the branch divine.
Then their dear Helicon's inspiring wave,
From where the winged steed smote the ground,
they gave,

Which deeply quaffed, thy verse the lineage told
Of gods and husbandry, and heroes old.

Goldwin Smith.

CALLIMACHUS.

TO HERACLITUS.

THEY told me, Heraclitus, thou wert dead,
And then I thought, and tears thereon did shed,
How oft we two talked down the sun ; but thou
Halicarnassian guest ! art ashes now,
Yet live thy nightingales of song : on those
Forgetfulness her hand shall ne'er impose.

H. N. Coleridge.

CRATES.

OLD AGE.

THESE shriveled sinews and this bending frame,
The workmanship of Time's strong hand proclaim ;

Skilled to reverse whate'er the gods create,
 And make that crooked which they fashion straight.
 Hard choice for man, to die — or else to be
 That tottering, wretched, wrinkled thing you see :
 Age then we all prefer ; for age we pray,
 And travel on to life's last, lingering day ;
 Then sinking slowly down from worse to worse,
 Find heaven's extorted boon our greatest curse.

Richard Cumberland.

ION.

TO EURIPIDES.

HAIL, dear Euripides, for whom a bed
 In black-leaved vales Pierian is spread :
 Dead though thou art, yet know thy fame shall be
 Like Homer's, green through all eternity.

J. A. Symonds.

JULIANUS ANTECESSOR.

STAY IN TOWN.

STAY in town, little wight,
 Safe at home :
 If you roam,
 The cranes who delight
 Upon pygmies to sup,
 Will gobble you up.
 Stay at home.

H. Wellesley.

JULIAN OF EGYPT.

ON DEMOCRITUS.

PLUTO, receive the sage, whose ghost
Is wafted to thy gloomy shore ;
One laughing spirit seeks the coast,
Where never smile was seen before.
J. H. Merivale.

MELEAGER.

SPRING.

Now the bright crocus flames, and now
The slim narcissus takes the rain,
And, straying o'er the mountain's brow,
The daffodillies bud again.
The thousand blossoms wax and wane
On wold, and heath, and fragrant bough,
But fairer than the flowers art thou,
Than any growth of hill or plain.

Ye gardens, cast your leafy crown,
That my Love's feet may tread it down,
Like lilies on the lilies set ;
My Love, whose lips are softer far
Than drowsy poppy petals are,
And sweeter than the violet !

Andrew Lang.

TO HELIODORA.

I 'LL frame, my Heliodora ! a garland for thy
hair,

Which thou, in all thy beauty's pride, mayst not
disdain to wear ;
For I with tender myrtles white violets will
twine —
White violets, but not so pure as that pure breast
of thine ;
With laughing lilies I will twine narcissus ; and
the sweet
Crocus shall in its yellow hue with purple hyacinth
meet :
And I will twine with all the rest, and all the rest
above,
Queen of them all, the red, red Rose, the flower
which lovers love.

John Wilson.

LOVE AT THE DOOR.

COLD blows the winter wind : 't is Love,
Whose sweet eyes swim with honeyed tears,
That bears me to thy doors, my love,
Tossed by the storm of hopes and fears.

Cold blows the blast of aching Love ;
But be thou for my wandering sail,
Adrift upon these waves of love,
Safe harbor from the whistling gale !

J. A. Symonds.

O GENTLE SHIPS.

O GENTLE ships that skim the seas,
And cleave the strait where Hellè fell,
Catch in your sails the northern breeze,
And speed to Cos where she doth dwell,

My Love, and see you greet her well !
And if she looks across the blue,
Speak, gentle ships, and tell her true --
"He comes, for Love hath brought him back,
No sailor, on the landward tack."

If thus, O gentle ships, ye do,
Then may ye win the fairest gales,
And swifter speed across the blue,
While Zeus breathes friendly on your sails.

Andrew Lang.

TO HELIODORA.

TEARS, Heliodora ! tears for thee, companion of
the dead,
Last yearnings of thy husband's love, to Hades
now I shed ;
Tears from a heart by anguish wrung for her whom
I deplore --
Memorials of regretful love upon her tomb I pour.
For thee, beloved, even with the dead, thy Mele-
ager sighs,
Now parting with a precious gift which Acheron
will not prize.
Where my desired blossom now ? its bloom hath
Hades spoiled,
And my consummate flower, alas ! the cruel dust
hath soiled.
Thou all-sustaining Mother, Earth ! oh, clasp her
to thy breast,
My evermore lamented one, -- and softly let her
rest !

John Wilson.

METRODORUS.

LIFE A BOON.

IN every way of life true pleasure flows :
Immortal fame from public action grows :
Within the doors is found appeasing rest ;
In fields the gifts of nature are expressed.
The sea brings gain, the rich abroad provide
To blaze their names, the poor their wants to
hide :

All households best are governed by a wife ;
His cares are light, who leads a single life :
Sweet children are delights which marriage bless ;
He that hath none disturbs his thoughts the less.
Strong youth can triumph in victorious deeds ;
Old age the soul with pious motion feeds.
All states are good, and they are falsely led
Who wish to be unborn or quickly dead.

Sir John Beaumont.

NOSSIS.

LOVE.

NAUGHT sweeter is than love. Whom that doth
bless

Regardeth all things less.

If thou first taste of love, then shalt thou see

Honey shall bitter be !

What roses are, they never know who miss

Fair Cytherea's kiss.

Lilla Cabot Perry.

PALLADAS.

ENJOY THE PRESENT.

DRINK and be merry. What the morrow brings
No mortal knoweth : wherefore toil or run ?
Spend while thou mayst, eat, fix on present things
Thy hopes and wishes : life and death are one.
One moment grasp life's goods ; to thee they fall :
Dead, thou hast nothing, and another all.

Goldwin Smith.

PAUL THE SILENTIARY.

FAREWELL.

THE moment comes to say to thee "farewell !"
Yet by thy side I linger silently.
Must I then go ? Such parting were to me
More dreadful than the darkest gloom of Hell,
For thou art as my very light of day,
But day is silent, and thy gentle voice
More than a Syren's song makes me rejoice,
And round thy lips all my soul's longings stay.

Lilla Cabot Perry.

AN UNKNOWN GRAVE.

My name, my country — what are they to thee ?
What, whether base or proud my pedigree ?
Perhaps I far surpassed all other men ;
Perhaps I fell below them all ; what then ?
Suffice it, stranger ! that thou seest a tomb ;
Thou know'st its use ; it hides — no matter whom.

William Cowper.

PHILEMON.

THE UPRIGHT CHARACTER.

HE is not just who doth no wrong, but he
Who will not when he may ; not he who, lured
By some poor petty prize, abstains, but he
Who with some mighty treasure in his grasp
May sin securely, yet abhors the sin.
Not he who closely skirts the pale of law,
But he whose generous nature, void of guile —
Would be, not seem to be, the upright man.

Milman.

PHILIP OF THESSALONICA.

TO HOMER.

THE stars shall fade upon the sky,
Or by the sky extinguished be,
The sun shall shine throughout the night,
The thirsty sailor from the sea
Shall drink fresh water, those that die
Shall greet once more the world of light,
Before shall be forgot the name
Of Homer or his verses' fame.

Lilla Cabot Perry.

PLATO.

'NEATH THIS TALL PINE.

'NEATH this tall pine,
That to the zephyr sways and murmurs low,
Mayst thou recline,

While near thee cooling waters flow.

This flute of mine

Shall pipe the softest song it knows to sing,
And to thy charmed eyelids sleep will bring.

Lilla Cabot Perry.

TO STELLA.

THOU gazest on the stars, my star !

Ah ! would that I might be

Myself those skies with myriad eyes,

That I might gaze on thee.

Lilla Cabot Perry.

TO STELLA.

THOU wert the morning star among the living,

Ere thy fair light had fled ;

Now, having died, thou art as Hesperus, giving

New splendor to the dead.

Shelley.

LOVE ASLEEP.

WE reached the grove's deep shadow and there
found

Cythera's son in sleep's sweet fetters bound ;

Looking like ruddy apples on their tree ;

No quiver and no bended bow had he ;

These were suspended on a leafy spray.

Himself in cups of roses cradled lay,

Smiling in sleep ; while from their flight in air,

The brown bees to his soft lips made repair,

To ply their waxen task and leave their honey
there.

Lord Neaves.

POSIDIPPUS.

LIFE A BANE.¹

WHAT course of life should wretched mortals take ?
 In courts hard questions large contention make :
 Care dwells in houses, labor in the field,
 Tumultuous seas affrighting dangers yield.
 In foreign lands thou never canst be blessed ;
 If rich, thou art in fear ; if poor, distressed.
 In wedlock frequent discontentments swell ;
 Unmarried persons as in deserts dwell.
 How many troubles are with children born ;
 Yet he that wants them counts himself forlorn.
 Young men are wanton, and of wisdom void ;
 Gray hairs are cold, unfit to be employed.
 Who would not one of these two offers choose,
 Not to be born, or breath with speed to lose ?

Sir John Beaumont.

RUFINUS.

GOLDEN EYES.

AH, Golden Eyes, to win you yet,
 I bring mine April coronet.
 The lovely blossoms of the spring,
 For you I weave, to you I bring : —
 These roses with the lilies wet,
 The dewy dark-eyed violet,
 Narcissus, and the wind-flower wet,
 Wilt thou disdain mine offering,
 Ah, Golden Eyes ?

¹ See Metrodorus, page 311.

Crowned with thy lover's flowers, forget
 The pride wherein thy heart is set ;
 For thou, like these or anything,
 Hast but thine hour of blossoming,
 Thy spring, and then — the long regret,
 Ah, Golden Eyes !

Andrew Lang.

SIMMIAS OF THEBES.

THE TOMB OF SOPHOCLES.

QUIETLY o'er the tomb of Sophocles,
 Quietly, ivy, creep with tendrils green ;
 And, roses, ope your petals everywhere,
 While dewy shoots of grapevine peep between,
 Upon the wise and honeyed poet's grave
 Whom Muse and Grace their richest treasures gave.

Lilla Cabot Perry.

TO AMYNTOR. .

TAKE old Amyntor to thy heart, dear soil,
 In kind remembrance of his former toil ;
 Who first enriched and ornamented thee
 With many a lovely shrub and branching tree,
 And lured a stream to fall in artful showers
 Upon thy thirsting herbs and fainting flowers.
 First in the spring he knew the rose to rear,
 First in the autumn culled the ripened pear ;
 His vines were envied all the country round,
 And favoring heaven showered plenty on his
 ground ;
 Therefore, kind earth, reward him in thy breast
 With a green covering and an easy rest.

Bland's Anthology.

TO PROTE.

THOU art not dead, my Prote ! thou art flown
 To a far country better than our own ;
 Thy home is now an island of the blest ;
 There 'mid Elysian meadows take thy rest,
 Or lightly trip along the flowery glade,
 Rich with the asphodels that never fade !
 Nor pain, nor cold, nor toil shall vex thee more,
 Nor thirst, nor hunger on that happy shore ;
 Nor longings vain (now that blest life is won)
 For such poor days as mortals here drag on ;
 To thee for aye a blameless life is given
 In the pure light of ever-present Heaven.

J. A. Symonds, M. D.

ANONYMOUS.

TO THEMISTOCLES.

By the sea's margin, on the watery strand,
 Thy monument, Themistocles, shall stand ;
 By this directed to thy native shore
 The merchant shall convey his freighted store ;
 And when our fleets are summoned to the fight,
 Athens shall conquer with thy tomb in sight.

Richard Cumberland.

THE SPIRIT OF PLATO.

EAGLE ! why soarest thou above that tomb ?
 To what sublime and star-ypaven home
 Floatest thou ?
 I am the image of swift Plato's spirit,

Ascending heaven — Athens doth inherit
His corpse below.

Shelley.

PLATO'S SOUL.

EARTH in her breast hides Plato's dust ; his soul
The gods forever 'mid their ranks enroll.

J. A. Symonds, M. D.

AFTER MANY A DUSTY MILE.

AFTER many a dusty mile,
Wanderer, linger here awhile ;
Stretch your limbs in this long grass ;
Through these pines a wind shall pass
That shall cool you with its wing ;
Grasshoppers shall shout and sing ;
While the shepherd on the hill,
Near a fountain warbling still,
Modulates, when noon is mute,
Summer songs along his flute ;
Underneath a spreading tree,
None so easy-limbed as he,
Sheltered from the dog-star's heat.

Rest ; and then, on freshened feet,
You shall pass the forest through,
It is Pan that counsels you.

Edmund W. Gosse.

THE MAID AT THE WEB.

SEE how the maid her distaff plies
And at the web her task pursues,

Fearing her mother's watchful eyes,
But all her thoughts are on the muse.

T. Warton.

RESPONSE OF THE PYTHIAN PRIESTESS.

To the pure precincts of Apollo's portal,
Come, pure in heart, and touch the lustral wave :
One drop sufficeth for the sinless mortal ;
All else, e'en ocean's billows, cannot lave.

J. E. Sandys.

ANACREONTICS.

THE DOVE.

TELL me, dear, delightful dove,
Emblematic bird of love,
On your wavering wings descending,
Whence you come, and whither tending ?
Tell me whence your snowy plumes
Breathe such fragrance of perfumes,
And what master you obey.
Gentle bird of Venus, say !
"Blithe Anacreon, the wise,"
(Thus the feathered page replies)
"Sends me o'er the meads and groves
To Bathyllus whom he loves,
To Bathyllus, beauteous boy,
Men's delight, and maidens' joy.
For a sonnet terse and trim,
Which the poets call a hymn,
Venus, in her sweet regard,
Sold me to the gentle bard :

Happy in his easy sway,
All his mandates I obey ;
Often through the fields of air
Song or billet-doux I bear.
'If you serve me well,' says he,
'I will shortly make you free.'
He may free me if he will,
Yet I'll stay and serve him still :
For what comfort can I know
On the mountain's barren brow ?
Or in deserts left alone,
There to murmur and to moan ?
Or in melancholy wood,
Pecking berries, nauseous food !
Now I eat delicious bread,
By my liberal master fed ;
Now I drink, of his own bowl,
Rosy wine that cheers my soul ;
Sometimes dance, and sometimes play,
Ever easy, ever gay ;
Or, my fragrant pinions spread,
Hovering o'er my master's head.
When my limbs begin to tire,
Then I perch upon his lyre ;
Soothing sounds my eyelids close,
Sweetly lulling my repose.
Now I've told you all I know,
Friend, adieu — 't is time to go ;
You my speed so long delay,
I have chattered like a jay."

Francis Fawkes.

THE WOUNDED CUPID.

CUPID, as he lay among
Roses, by a bee was stung.
Whereupon, in anger flying
To his mother, said thus, crying,
“ Help, oh help, your boy ’s a-dying ! ”
“ And why, my pretty lad ? ” said she.
Then, blubbering, replied he,
“ A winged snake has bitten me,
Which country-people call a bee.”
At which she smiled ; then with her hairs
And kisses drying up his tears,
“ Alas,” said she, “ my wag ! if this
Such a pernicious torment is ;
Come, tell me, then, how great ’s the smart
Of those thou woundest with thy dart ! ”

Robert Herrick.

THE GRASSHOPPER.

HAPPY insect ! what can be
In happiness compared to thee ?
Fed with nourishment divine,
The dewy morning’s gentle wine !
Nature waits upon thee still,
And thy verdant cup does fill ;
’T is filled wherever thou dost tread,
Nature’s self ’s thy Ganymede.
Thou dost drink, and dance, and sing,
Happier than the happiest king !
All the fields which thou dost see,
All the plants belong to thee ;

All that summer hours produce,
Fertile made with early juice.
Man for thee does sow and plough ;
Farmer he, and landlord thou !
Thou dost innocently joy ;
Nor does thy luxury destroy.
The shepherd gladly heareth thee,
More harmonious than he.
Thee country hinds with gladness hear,
Prophet of the ripened year !
Thee Phœbus loves and does inspire,
Phœbus is himself thy sire.
To thee of all things upon earth,
Life is no longer than thy mirth.
Happy insect ! happy thou,
Dost neither age nor winter know !
But when thou 'st drunk, and danced, and sung
Thy fill, the flowery leaves among,
(Voluptuous and wise withal,
Epicurean animal !)
Sated with thy summer feast,
Thou retir'st to endless rest.

Abraham Cowley.

CUPID BENIGHTED.

THE sable night had spread around
This nether world a gloom profound ;
No silver moon nor stars appear,
And strong Boötes urged the Bear.
The race of man, with toils opprest,
Enjoyed the balmy sweets of rest ;
When from the heavenly court of Jove

Descended swift the God of Love,
(Ah me! I tremble to relate)
And loudly thundered at my gate.
"Who's there?" I cried, "who breaks my door
At this unseasonable hour?"

The God, with well-dissembled sighs
And moan insidious, thus replies:
"Pray ope the door, dear Sir, 't is I,
A harmless, miserable boy;
Benumbed with cold and rain I stray
A long, uncomfortable way;
The winds with blustering horror roar —
'T is dismal dark — pray ope the door."

Quite unsuspecting of a foe
I listened to the tale of woe;
Compassion touched my breast, and strait
I struck a light, unbarred the gate;
When, lo! a wingèd boy I spied
With bow and quiver at his side:
I wondered at his strange attire;
Then friendly placed him near the fire.
My heart was bounteous and benign;
I warmed his little hands in mine,
Cheered him with kind assiduous care,
And wrung the water from his hair.
Soon as the fraudulent youth was warm,
"Let's try," says he, "if any harm
Has chanced my bow this stormy night;
I fear the wet has spoiled it quite."
With that he bent the fatal yew,
And to the head an arrow drew;
Loud twanged the sounding string, the dart

Pierced through my liver and my heart.
Then laughed amain the wanton boy,
And, "Friend," he cried, "I wish thee joy;
Undamaged is my bow, I see,
But what a wretch I've made of thee."

Fawkes.

LOVE'S ARROWS.

As, by his Lemnian forge's flame,
The husband of the Paphian dame
Moulded the glowing steel, to form
Arrows for Cupid, thrilling warm;
And Venus, as he plied his art,
Shed honey round each new-made dart,
While Love, at hand, to finish all,
Tipped every arrow's point with gall;
It chanced the Lord of Battles came
To visit that deep cave of flame.
'T was from the ranks of war he rushed,
His spear with many a life-drop blushed;
He saw the fiery darts, and smiled
Contemptuous at the archer-child.
"What!" said the urchin, "dost thou smile?
Here, hold this little dart awhile,
And thou wilt find, though swift of flight,
My bolts are not so feathery light."

Mars took the shaft — and, oh, thy look,
Sweet Venus, when the shaft he took.
Sighing, he felt the urchin's art,
And cried, in agony of heart,
"It is not light — I sink with pain!
Take — take thy arrow back again."

“No,” said the child, “it must not be ;
That little dart was made for thee ! ”

Moore.

CUPID A PRISONER.

LATE the Muses Cupid found
And with wreaths of roses bound,
Bound him fast, as soon as caught,
And to blooming Beauty brought.
Venus with large ransom strove
To release the God of Love.
Vain is ransom, vain is fee,
Love refuses to be free.
Happy in his rosy chain,
Love with Beauty will remain.

Fawkes.

ENJOY THE PRESENT.

WHAT is Gyges' wealth to me,
Though golden Sardis' king he be ?
I desire not to be great,
Envy not the tyrant's state.
All my joy is still to wear
Rosy chaplets in my hair,
To-day, to-day's my care alone ;
The dark to-morrow's all unknown.

Milman.

ON HIMSELF.

THE women to me say,
“Anacreon, you grow gray !
Look in your glass and see

Your hairs, how scantily
They flow — your brows are bare.”
Then I: “As for the hair,
That may be or may not,
I reckon it not a jot;
But this I know indeed,
If I grow old, more need
To have my fling of laughter,
The sooner Fate comes after.”

Edwin Arnold.

THE SWALLOW.

(A PARAPHRASE.)

THOU indeed, little Swallow,
A sweet yearly comer,
Art building a hollow
New nest every summer,
And straight dost depart
Where no gazing can follow,
Past Memphis, down Nile!
Ay! but love all the while
Builds his nest in my heart,
Through the cold winter-weeks:
And as one Love takes flight,
Comes another, O Swallow,
In an egg warm and white,
And another is callow.
And the large gaping beaks
Chirp all day and all night:
And the Loves who are older
Help the young and the poor Loves,

And the young Loves grown bolder
Increase by the score Loves —
Why, what can be done?
If a noise comes from one,
Can I bear all this rout of a hundred and more
Loves?

Mrs. Browning.

PROCLUS, 450 A. D.

HYMNS.

TO THE MUSES.

GLORY and praise to those sweet lamps of earth,
The nine fair daughters of Almighty Jove,
Who all the passage dark to death from birth
Lead wandering souls with their bright beams of
love.

Through cares of mortal life, through pain and woe,
The tender solace of their counsel saves ;
The healing secrets of their songs forego
Despair ; and when we tremble at the waves

Of life's wild sea of murk incertitude,
Their gentle touch upon the helm is pressed,
Their hand points out the beacon-star of good,
Where we shall make our harbor, and have
rest, —

The planet of our home wherefrom we fell,
Allured by this poor show of lower things,
Tempted among earth's dull deceits to dwell :
But oh, great Sisters, hear his prayer who sings,

And calm the restless flutter of his breast,
And fill him with the thirst for wisdom's stream ;

Nor ever suffer thoughts or men unblest
To turn his vision from the eternal beam.

Ever and ever higher from the throng
Lawless and witless, lead his feet aright
Life's perils and perplexities among,
To the white centre of the sacred light.

Feed him with food of that rich fruit which grows
On stems of splendid learning — dower him still
With gifts of eloquence to vanquish those
Who err — let soft persuasion change their will.

Hear, heavenly Sisters, hear ! oh, ye who know
The winds of wisdom's sea, the course to steer ;
Who light the flame that lightens all below,
And bring the spirits of the perfect there

Where the immortals are, when this life's fever
Is left behind as a dread gulf o'erpassed ;
And souls like mariners, escaped forever,
Throng on the happy foreland, saved at last.

Edwin Arnold.

NOTES.

Page 3. *Homer.*

OF Homer, the earliest and greatest name in Greek literature, absolutely nothing is known with certainty. His date may be assigned as 900 B. C., though there is a difference of several centuries between the extreme dates given for the age in which he lived. But in modern times the very existence of the poet has been doubted, and various theories as to the authorship of the two great poems, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, have given rise to what is known as the "Homeric Question." In this discussion the Germans have been particularly prominent. Among the English may be mentioned Mure (*History of Greek Literature*), Grote (*History of Greece*), Geddes (*Problem of the Homeric Poems*), Paley (*Introduction to his edition of the Iliad*). An admirable survey of the whole question may be found in Jebb's "*Introduction to Homer*."

Page 3. *The Iliad.*

In selecting from the *Iliad* the editor has wished to include certain celebrated scenes, and at the same time such other passages as might outline the main story of the poem — that is, the "Wrath of Achilles," which in the very first line Homer announces as his theme. For, however prominent other personages may be, it must not be forgotten that Achilles is still the hero. The unity of the poem is centred in this fact, and however long may be the episodes and digressions, they are seen to be but subsidiary when viewed from this stand-

point. In the first book we have an account of the quarrel of Achilles and Agamemnon — the incident out of which the poem is developed. From books two to eight, inclusive, Achilles disappears from view. But he is not forgotten ; he is indeed conspicuous by his absence ; for the Greeks miss him sorely from the fight, and are even brought to the verge of ruin. In the ninth book he rejects the overtures of Agamemnon, who would fain win him back to the war. In book eighteen he learns of the death, on the field, of Patroclus, his bosom friend. Now, forgetting everything else in his wrath and anguish of spirit, he becomes reconciled to Agamemnon and returns to the conflict, as told in the nineteenth book. In books twenty and twenty-one he is the central figure — ranging the battlefield like a demon of destruction. In the twenty-second book he fights with Hector, and slays him, and so avenges the death of his friend Patroclus. Two more books follow with the account of the funeral of Patroclus and the ransoming and funeral of Hector ; and so the story of the poem, that is, the story of the “Wrath of Achilles” and its disastrous results, has been told.

Page 22. *Helen on the Walls.*

Matthew Arnold speaks of this short translation, in the hexameter measure of the original, as “the most successful attempt hitherto made at rendering Homer into English, the attempt in which Homer’s general effect has been best retained.”

Page 24. *Parting of Hector and Andromache.*

“There never was a finer piece of painting than this. Hector extends his arms to embrace his child ; the child, affrighted at the glittering of his helmet and the shaking of the plume, shrinks backward to the breast of his nurse ; Hector unbraces his helmet, lays

it on the ground, takes the infant in his arms, lifts him towards heaven, and offers a prayer for him to the gods ; then returns him to the mother, Andromache, who receives him with a smile of pleasure, but at the same instant the fears for her husband make her burst into tears. All these are but small circumstances, but so artfully chosen that every reader immediately feels the force of them and represents the whole in the utmost liveliness to his imagination. This alone might be a confutation of that false criticism some have fallen into, who affirm that a poet ought only to collect the great and noble particulars in his paintings. But it is in the images of things as in the characters of persons : where a small action, or even a small circumstance of an action, lets us more into the knowledge of them than the material and principal parts themselves." — *Pope's Note.*

Page 34. *Sarpedon and Glaucus.*

See, in Matthew Arnold's "Essay on Translating Homer," interesting reference to this "tonic speech of Sarpedon."

Page 65. *The Odyssey.*

The Odyssey is the story of Odysseus (Ulysses). At the time of the opening of the poem Ulysses has been absent from his home nearly twenty years. During this time Penelope, his wife, is greatly persecuted by suitors for her hand, who, in their insolence, come daily to revel in her palace, as related in books one and two. Telemachus, her son, being unable to repel them, goes forth under divine direction to seek tidings of his father, his journey being narrated in books three and four. But in the mean time the long absence of Ulysses is approaching its end. He himself appears for the first time in the poem in book five, just as he is about to

leave the island of Calypso. Arriving at the land of the Phæacians he is hospitably received by them, and at the request of Alcinoüs the king he tells the story of his wanderings during the ten years since the Fall of Troy. This story runs through books nine, ten, eleven, and twelve. Alcinoüs afterwards furnishes him with a ship and sailors, and sends him home to Ithaca. In the books that follow we are told of his arrival ; how he disguises himself as a beggar, and is a witness of the revelings in his own palace of the insolent suitors, who little dream that its rightful lord is really among them. Various incidents delay the *dénouement*, until in the twenty-second book Ulysses, with the assistance of his son Telemachus and his faithful servants, and aided by his constant protector Athene, succeeds in slaying the suitors. Then follows his recognition by his wife Penelope ; and in the twenty-fourth and last book the resistance on the part of his Ithacan subjects, enraged at the slaughter of the suitors, and their final submission to his authority.

Page 73, etc. *Worsley's Translations.*

“ Mr. Worsley, — applying the Spenserian stanza, that most beautiful measure, to the most romantic poem of the ancient world ; making this stanza yield him, too (what it never yielded to Byron), its treasures of fluidity and sweet ease ; above all, bringing to his task a truly poetical sense and skill, — has produced a version of the Odyssey much the most pleasing of those hitherto produced, and which is delightful to read.” — *Matthew Arnold.*

Page 76. *The Lotus-Eaters.*

Compare the following stanzas from Tennyson's *Lotus-Eaters* : —

“ The charmèd sunset lingered low adown
 In the red West: thro’ mountain clefts the dale
 Was seen far inland, and the yellow down
 Bordered with palm, and many a winding vale
 And meadow, set with slender galingale ;
 A land where all things always seemed the same !
 And round about the keel with faces pale,
 Dark faces pale against that rosy flame,
 The mild-eyed melancholy Lotus-Eaters came.

“ Branches they bore of that enchanted stem,
 Laden with flower and fruit, whereof they gave
 To each ; but whoso did receive of them,
 And taste, to him the gushing of the wave
 Far, far away did seem to mourn and rave
 On alien shores ; and if his fellow spake,
 His voice was thin, as voices from the grave ;
 And deep asleep he seemed yet all awake,
 And music in his ears his beating heart did make.

“ They sat them down upon the yellow sand
 Between the sun and moon upon the shore ;
 And sweet it was to dream of Fatherland,
 Of child, and wife, and slave : but evermore
 Most weary seemed the sea, weary the oar,
 Weary the wandering fields of barren foam.
 Then some one said, ‘ We will return no more ; ’
 And all at once they sang, ‘ Our island home
 Is far beyond the wave ; we will no longer roam.’ ”

Page 79. “ *Hermes gave him the plant Moly.*”

“ It is pretended that Moly is an Egyptian plant, and that it was really made use of as a preservative against enchantment ; but I believe the Moly of Mercury and the Nepenthe of Helen are of the same production, and grow only in poetical ground.” — *Pope.*

Page 98. *Homeric Hymn to Hermes.*

The so-called Homeric Hymns are now supposed to belong to a later period than that of Homer. They may be placed between 750 and 500 B. C. It is to be observed that they can hardly be called hymns as the word is now commonly understood. These hymns, thirty-three in number, written in the hexameter verse of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, are addressed to various divinities, and in most cases narrate adventures or passages in the life of the particular divinity, as in the selection given in the text. H. N. Coleridge observes that "in this hymn Hermes is gifted with the character of a perfect Spanish Picaro, a sort of Lazarillo de Tormes among the gods, stealing their goods, playing them tricks, and telling such enormous, such immortal lies to screen himself from detection, that certainly no human thief could ever have the vanity to think of rivaling them on earth." Shelley's version of this hymn, of which not more than a quarter is given in the text, is a masterpiece. Several of the shorter hymns were also translated by him.

Page 107. *Hesiod.*

The date of Hesiod, like that of Homer, is uncertain. His work, however, belongs to the early poetry of the Greeks,—somewhat later than the age of the composition of the *Iliad*, but before 800 B. C. The *Theogony* is interesting as a poetic presentation, in somewhat systematic form, of the current legends concerning the origin of nature, and of the gods of the Greeks. The *Works and Days* is a didactic poem; the first part is ethical in character; then come practical directions for the farmer in his work. The stories of Prometheus and Pandora are first told in Hesiod.

Page 112. *Early Lyric.*

The next phase of Greek poetry, after Homer and Hesiod, is represented by writers of Elegiac and Iambic verse, and the great company of Lyric Poets. This period may be given as extending 700–450 B. C. Little more than fragments, except in the case of Pindar, remain to us to represent authors of great celebrity in antiquity.

Page 113. *Martial Elegy of Tyrtæus.*

“The sentiment of the last lines is not only ethically spirited, but it is also singularly, exquisitely Greek. The æsthetic tact of the Greek race felt the plastic charm of a youth’s form dead upon the battlefield. Like a statue marbled by the frost of death he lies, the perfection of life-moulded clay ; and his red wounds are the lips of everlasting praise. Not so the elder man. Nakedness and mutilation bring no honor to him ; he has no loveliness of shape to be revealed and heightened by the injuries of war ; for him the flowing beard and the robes of reverend eld are a majestic covering, to be withdrawn by no hand seeking to unveil secluded beauties.” — *J. A. Symonds.*

Page 115. *Nature’s Calm.*

Compare Goethe : —

“ Ueber allen Gipfeln
Ist Ruh,
In allen Wipfeln
Spürest du
Kaum einen Hauch ;
Die Vögelein schweigen im Walde,
Warte nur, balde
Ruhest du auch.”

Page 116. *Ode in Imitation of Alcæus.*

These noble lines of Sir William Jones are built up from the merest fragment of the Greek poet — four words only in the original — “brave men (a) land’s defense.”

Page 117. *Sappho.*

The name of Sappho has come down to us celebrated with the most enthusiastic eulogy by the ancient critics. In the old epigram she was called the tenth Muse : —

“Some call the Muses nine. How careless, when
Sappho of Lesbos makes the number ten!”

Only fragments of her work remain, but so exquisite as to make us realize the loss we have suffered.

Page 117. *Ode to a Loved One.*

The following Latin version has come down to us from Catullus : —

“Ille mi par esse deo videtur,
Ille, si fas est, superare divos,
Qui sedens adversus identidem te
Spectat et audit

“Dulce ridentem, misero quod omnis
Eripit sensus mihi : nam simul te,
Lesbia, aspexi, nihil est super mi

.

“Lingua sed torpet, tenuis sub artus
Flamma demanat, sonitu suapte
Tintinant aures geminæ, teguntur
Lumina nocte.”

Page 119. "*O Hesperus ! Thou bringest all things home.*"

Compare Byron's beautiful paraphrase (Don Juan, Canto iii. stanza 107) : —

"O Hesperus ! thou bringest all good things,
Home to the weary, to the hungry cheer,
To the young bird the parent's brooding wings,
The welcome stall to the o'erlabored steer ;
Whate'er of peace about our hearthstone clings,
Whate'er our household gods protect of dear,
Are gathered round us by thy look of rest ;
Thou bring'st the child, too, to the mother's breast."

Page 125. *Thermopylæ.*

The epigram is upon the Spartans who fell at Thermopylæ, 480 B. C. Christopher North, in his article on the Anthology in Blackwood's Magazine (vol. xxxiv. p. 970), gives eighteen English versions. He says of this epigram : "The oldest and best inscription is that on the altar-tomb of the Three Hundred. Do you remember it ? Here it is — the Greek — with three Latin and eighteen English versions. Start not : it is but two lines — and all Greece, for centuries, had them by heart. She forgot them, and 'Greece was living Greece no more.'"

Page 127. "*I'll wreathe my sword in myrtle bough !*"

This patriotic song commemorates the deed of Harmodius and Aristogiton, who delivered Athens from the rule of the tyrants Hippias and Hipparchus. (514 B. C.)

Page 128. "*She is here, she is here, the Swallow !*"

This "Swallow Song" is preserved in Athenæus, who tells us that in spring-time the children went round

the town collecting presents from house to house, and singing as they went.

Page 131. *Pindar.*

Pindar wrote every variety of ode or lyric. Forty-four of his *Epinikia* or *Triumphal Odes* have come down to us. These were written in honor of the victors in the great athletic contests of the Greeks — the Olympian, Pythian, Nemean, and Isthmian Games. Of his other works only fragments remain. In writing the *Triumphal Odes*, Pindar said but little about the particular performance of the victor who was the subject of the ode, but drawing liberally from national legends of the Greeks, he strove to link the victor with these legends and so emphasize the glory of his ancestry or his city. In this way, and for other reasons, what with his wondrous style, he seems to have appealed powerfully to the Greeks. But it is difficult now for us to feel his splendor as did the ancients ; at any rate, for none of the Greek poets is translation found so inadequate as for Pindar.

Page 140. *Æschylus.*

Of the three great tragic writers but scanty remains have come down to us — from *Æschylus*, seven out of seventy plays ; from *Sophocles*, seven out of one hundred and thirteen ; from *Euripides*, seventeen out of ninety-two.

Page 141. *Sacrifice of Iphigenia.*

When the Greeks were detained at Aulis by contrary winds, Calchas the priest told them that the gods could be made favorable only by the sacrifice of Iphigenia, the daughter of the chieftain Agamemnon. Then the father, greatly afflicted, must needs consent. But at the last Artemis interfered, substituting a fawn at the

altar, and carrying off the maiden to be her priestess among the Tauri. Iphigenia's story is the subject of two plays by Euripides — the Iphigenia at Aulis and the Iphigenia among the Taurians. See, also, Goethe's exquisite Iphigenie auf Tauris. Compare Tennyson, Dream of Fair Women :—

“ I was cut off from hope in that sad place,
Which yet to name my spirit loathes and fears ;
My father held his hand upon his face ;
I, blinded with my tears,

“ Still strove to speak : my voice was thick with sighs
As in a dream. Dimly I could descry
The stern black-bearded kings, with wolfish eyes,
Waiting to see me die.

“ The high masts flickered as they lay afloat ;
The crowds, the temples wavered, and the shore ;
The bright death quivered at the victim's throat,
Touched ; and I knew no more.”

Page 144. *Progress of the Beacon-fires.*

“ It is the orthodox custom of translators to render the dialogue of the Greek plays in blank verse, — but in this instance the whole animation and rapidity of the original would be utterly lost in the stiff construction and protracted rhythm of that metre.” — *Bulwer's Note to his Translation.*

This description of the beacon-fires has been imitated by Lord Macaulay in his ballad, The Armada :—

“ Then twelve fair counties saw the blaze
On Malvern's lonely height,
Till streamed in crimson on the wind
The Wrekin's crest of light,
Till broad and fierce the stars came forth
On Ely's stately fane,

And tower and hamlet rose in arms
 O'er all the boundless plain ;
 Till Belvoir's lordly terraces
 The sign of Lincoln sent,
 And Lincoln sped the message on
 O'er the wide vale of Trent ;
 Till Skiddaw saw the fire that burned
 On Gaunt's embattled pile,
 And the red glare on Skiddaw roused
 The burghers of Carlisle."

Page 159. *The Murder of Agamemnon.*

Agamemnon after his welcome home by his wife Clytemnestra has passed into the palace from which he is never to emerge. Cassandra still remains outside the door. She is a captive Trojan maiden endowed with the gift of prophecy, and has been foretelling to the Chorus in dark, "whirling words" the doom of Agamemnon and of herself.

Page 165. *Choëphori.*

This play is a continuation of the story of the Agamemnon. The Choëphori (Libation-Bearers) form the Chorus. They are captive maidens in attendance upon Queen Clytemnestra, who, having had a fearful dream, has sent them to make libation upon the tomb of Agamemnon, her murdered husband, if, perchance, she may appease his shade.

Page 172. *Prometheus alone.*

Compare Byron's lines : —

"Titan! to whose immortal eyes
 The sufferings of mortality,
 Seen in their sad reality,
 Were not as things that gods despise,
 What was thy pity's recompense ?

A silent suffering, and intense ;
 The rock, the vulture, and the chain ;
 All that the proud can feel of pain ;
 The agony they do not show ;
 The suffocating sense of woe.

Thy godlike crime was to be kind ;
 To render with thy precepts less
 The sum of human wretchedness,
 And strengthen man with his own mind.
 And, baffled as thou wert from high,
 Still, in thy patient energy,
 In the endurance and repulse,
 Of thine impenetrable spirit,
 Which earth and heaven could not convulse,
 ' A mighty lesson we inherit."

Page 202. *Power of Love.*

Compare Sir Walter Scott's Lay of the Last Min-
 strel : —

" In peace, Love tunes the shepherd's reed ;
 In war, he mounts the warrior's steed ;
 In halls, in gay attire is seen ;
 In hamlets, dances on the green.
 Love rules the court, the camp, the grove,
 And men below, and saints above ;
 For love is heaven, and heaven is love."

Page 204. *Ajax.*

" After the death of Achilles, the armor made for him by Hephæstus was to be given to the worthiest of the surviving Greeks. Although Ajax was the most valiant, the judges made the award to Ulysses, because he was the wisest.

" Ajax in his rage attempts to kill the generals ; but Athena sends madness upon him, and he makes a raid

upon the flocks and herds of the army, imagining the bulls and rams to be the Argive chiefs. On awakening from his delusion, he finds that he has fallen irrecoverably from honor and from the favor of the Greeks. He also imagines that the anger of Athena is unappeasable. Under this impression he eludes the loving eyes of his captive-bride Tecmessa, and of his Salaminian comrades, and falls upon his sword." — *Lewis Campbell*.

Page 244. *Troades*.

"The depreciation, almost contemptuous, of Euripides seems to be an axiom of modern criticism. Yet I must confess my sympathy with Mr. Coleridge, who speaks with his peculiar warmth of the 'passionate outpourings' of Euripides; and the greater than Coleridge — Milton — who seems to have had a passion for 'Sad Electra's Poet.' Perhaps their beauty is heightened when read as separate poetic passages, by their independence of the dramatic action. Hence to me the charm of the *Troades*. It is no drama, it has scarcely a fable. It is a series of pathetic speeches and exquisite odes on the Fall of Troy. What can be more admirable, in the midst of these speeches of woe and sorrow, than the wild outburst of Cassandra into a bridal song, instead of, as Shakespeare describes her, 'shrilling her dolours forth'?" — *H. H. Milman*.

Page 250. *Noble Blood*.

Compare Tennyson :—

"Howe'er it be, it seems to me,
'Tis only noble to be good.
Kind hearts are more than coronets,
And simple faith than Norman blood."

Page 251. *Aristophanes.*

The "Old Comedy" of the Greeks, as it is technically called, is represented by Aristophanes. Only eleven have survived out of the fifty-four plays which he is said to have written. The "New Comedy," more like the modern comedy of society and manners, belongs a century later. Of Menander, its most celebrated representative, only fragments remain.

Page 272. *Theocritus.*

O Singer of the field and fold,
THEOCRITUS! Pan's pipe was thine,
Thine was the happier age of gold!

For thee the scent of new-turned mould,
The beehive and the murmuring pine,
O Singer of the field and fold!

Thou sang'st the simple feasts of old,
The beechen bowl made glad with wine,
Thine was the happier age of gold!

Thou bad'st the rustic loves be told,
Thou bad'st the tuneful reeds combine,
O Singer of the field and fold!

And round thee, ever-laughing, rolled
The blithe and blue Sicilian brine,
Thine was the happier age of gold!

To-day our songs are faint and cold.
Our northern suns too sadly shine;
O Singer of the field and fold,
Thine was the happier age of gold!

Austin Dobson.

Of the Bucolic or Pastoral poets, first and foremost is Theocritus, who flourished about 270 B. C. He was

born in Syracuse, but appears to have passed some time at Alexandria, the capital of the Ptolemies, then a great centre of culture and refinement. Little is known of his life. Some thirty poems have come down to us under his name. They are known as Idyls (little pictures), a name which suits them well enough. Few of them, however, can properly be called pastoral. Besides those given in the text, we may mention the second, a curious scene of ancient incantation ; the fifth, a picture of rough, rustic manners ; the seventh, which tells the fate of Comatas, some sweet singer of the country-side : —

“ How of old

The goat-herd by his cruel lord was bound,
And left to die in a great chest ; and how
The busy bees, up coming from the meadows
To the sweet cedar, fed him with soft flowers,
Because the muse had filled his mouth with nectar.” ¹

To these may be added the twenty-first, depicting the life of two “ toilers of the sea.”

From Bion and Moschus, each, we have some half dozen idyls and a few fragments. Idyl III. of Moschus is a Lament for Bion, who, it would seem, was his teacher and friend. The “ Lament ” has been translated by Leigh Hunt and others.

Page 274. *Cyclops in love.*

“ This idyl displays, in the most graceful manner, the Alexandrian taste for turning Greek mythology into love stories. No creature could be more remote from love than the original Polyphemus, the cannibal giant of the Odyssey.” — *Andrew Lang.*

¹ Leigh Hunt.

Page 295. *The Stray Cupid.*

Compare Ben Jonson, Hue and Cry after Cupid : —

“ Beauties, have ye seen this toy,
 Callèd Love, a little boy,
 Almost naked, wanton, blind,
 Cruel now, and then as kind ?
 If he be amongst you, say,
 He is Venus’ runaway.”

Page 298. *Medea at Night.*

The passage is from the *Argonautica*. In the third book we have the story of the passion of Medea and Jason. Says Mr. Mahaffy : “ There is a sort of modernness, a minuteness of psychological analysis in Apollonius, which we seek in vain even in Euripides, the most advanced of the classical poets. The scene where Medea determines in her agony to commit suicide, but recoils with the reaction of a strong youthful nature from death, is the ancient parallel, if not the prototype, of the splendid scene near the opening of Goethe’s ‘ Faust,’ and is well worth reading.”

Page 300. *The Hero and Leander of Musæus.*

The story of Hero and Leander was the subject of a poem by Christopher Marlowe which, however, he left half-finished, but which was completed by George Chapman (1598). An entirely distinct work was the translation by Chapman of the original poem of Musæus. The title-page reads as follows : “ The Divine Poem of Musæus. First of all Bookes. Translated According to the Originall, By Geo : Chapman. London, Printed by Isaac Iaggard. 1616.” In his prefatory note, addressed “ To the Commune Reader,” he calls the original “ the incomparable love poem of the world.” The poem translated by Chapman is now assigned to one Musæus, who lived, probably, in the

fifth century after Christ. Chapman confounded him with the semi-mythical poet and seer, Μωσæus, who figures in the Argonautic story prior to the Trojan war and Homer.

Page 301. "*Sweet, for thy love the watery way I'd cleave.*"

Compare Byron, *Bride of Abydos* : —

"The winds are high on Helle's wave,
 As on that night of stormy water
 When Love, who sent, forgot to save
 The young, the beautiful, the brave,
 The lonely hope of Sestos' daughter.
 Oh ! when alone along the sky
 Her turret-torch was blazing high,
 Though rising gale, and breaking foam,
 And shrieking sea-birds warned him home ;
 And clouds aloft and tides below,
 With signs and sounds forbade to go,
 He could not see, he would not hear,
 Or sound or sign foreboding fear ;
 His eye but saw that light of love,
 The only star it hailed above ;
 His ear but rang with Hero's song,
 ' Ye waves, divide not lovers long ! '
 That tale is old, but love anew
 May nerve young hearts to prove as true."

Page 302. *The Anthology.*

The term "Anthology," literally a collection of flowers, is used with reference to certain early collections of short poems or selected passages. Such Anthologies seem to have existed among the Greeks as far back as the classical age. The great collection known as that of Cephalas of Byzantium, dating from the tenth century, was fortunately discovered by Claude de Saumaise in the Palatine library at Heidelberg. It

may well be called priceless. It contains several thousand poems, covering a period of a thousand years, that is, from the Persian Invasions in the fifth century B. C. to the reign of Justinian. These pieces, from a variety of authors, some of them unknown, treat of as great a variety of subjects. They are patriotic, sentimental, satirical. They deal with love, art, history. They moralize upon the shortness of life and bid us "gather roses while we may." In brief, they give us an insight into the life and modes of thought of the Greeks, during the long period which they cover, of the greatest interest and value. The earliest collection of English versions from the Anthology is that of Bland, first published in 1806, a book which, in its time, attracted a great deal of attention. Byron thus addresses its editors : —

" And you associate bards ! who snatched to light
Those gems too long withheld from modern sight ;
Whose mingling taste combined to cull the wreath
Where Attic flowers Aonian odors breathe,
And all their renovated fragrance flung
To grace the beauties of your native tongue."

For a full account of the Anthology the reader may refer to the volume on the subject in the series of " Ancient Classics for English Readers," and to the chapter in Symonds' " Studies of the Greek Poets," vol. ii.

The dates of the most important authors from the Anthology are as follows : Agathias, 570 A. D. ; Callimachus, 250 B. C. ; Meleager, 50 B. C. ; Paulus Silentiarius, 530 A. D. ; Plato, 400 B. C. ; Rufinus, 100 A. D. ; Simmias, 300 A. D.

Page 303. "*I love not wine, but shouldst thou wish.*"

With the epigram of Agathias, compare Ben Jonson's : —

“ Drink to me only with thine eyes,
 And I will pledge with mine ;
 Or leave a kiss but in the cup,
 And I'll not look for wine.”

Page 306. *To Heraclitus.*

With the Address to Heraclitus, compare Cowley's beautiful elegy on the death of his friend, William Hervey :—

“ Say, for you saw us, ye immortal lights,
 How oft unwearied have we spent the nights,
 Till the Ledæan stars, so famed for love,
 Wondered at us from above ?
 We spent them not in toys, or lust, or wine,
 But search of deep philosophy,
 Wit, eloquence, and poetry,
 Arts which I loved, for they, my friend, were thine.”

Page 314. *To Stella.*

“ *Thou gazest on the stars, my star.*”

Compare Coleridge, *Autumnal Evening* :—

“ On Seraph wing I'd float a Dream by night,
 To soothe my Love with shadows of delight :
 Or soar aloft to be the Spangled Skies,
 And gaze upon her with a thousand eyes ! ”

Page 319. *Anacreontics.*

The little sportive effusions, some sixty in number, passing under the name of Anacreon, are probably most of them spurious, and to be dated after the Christian era—some of them as late as 500 A. D. The real Anacreon flourished about 530 B. C., but only a few fragments of his work remain.

Page 328. *Proclus.*

Brief mention of some of the later Greek verse may be made here. Oppian (180 A. D.) wrote *Halieutica*,

a sort of "Complete Angler," and an epic called *Cynegetica* (on Hunting). *Lithica* (on Precious Stones) belongs to the fourth century ; also the so-called Orphic Hymns, of a mystical character, the outburst of Neoplatonism. In the fifth century occur the names of Nonnus, Quintus Smyrnæus, Musæus, and Proclus. Of the Prayer to the Muses of Proclus, Edwin Arnold says : " It is, in fact, an epitaph upon a buried religion, written in its own disused hieroglyphics ; an elegy for Greek song, now at last ending forever."

Some translations and books of reference for the study of the Greek Poets may here be mentioned.

For Homer, besides Chapman, Pope, Cowper, Bryant, Worsley, who are represented in this volume, the following translators may be named. For the *Iliad*, William Sotheby (1831), F. W. Newman (1856, severely criticised by Matthew Arnold in his essay, " On translating Homer "), Lord Derby (1864), Charles Merivale (1869), A. S. Way (1888). For the *Odyssey*, A. S. Way, " *Avia* " (1880), William Morris (author of " *Janson*,") (1887).

For Hesiod, Elton's is the best translation. The *Works and Days* was translated by Chapman (1618). Thomas Cooke's translation (1743) is pronounced by Mahaffy " a pretentious and dull rendering." For the other authors the following translators may be mentioned.

For Pindar — Gilbert West (1749), H. F. Cary (1833), Abraham Moore (1852), T. C. Baring (1875). For the *Olympian* and *Pythian Odes*, George Moberly (1876), Francis D. Morice (1876).

For *Æschylus* — Robert Potter (1777) ; J. S. Blackie (1850) ; E. H. Plumptre (1868). Single plays have often been translated : *e. g.*, *Agamemnon*, by H. H. Milman, Edward Fitzgerald, Robert Browning ; *Pro-*

metheus, by Mrs. Browning ; Agamemnon, Choëphori, and Eumenides (under the title, "The House of Atreus"), and The Suppliant Women, by E. D. A. Morshead.

For Sophocles — Thomas Francklin (1757) ; R. Potter (1788) ; Thomas Dale (1825) ; E. H. Plumptre (1865) ; Lewis Campbell (1883).

For Euripides — M. Woodhull (1782) ; R. Potter (1782). Single plays — Alcestitis and Hercules Furens, by Robert Browning ; Bacchæ, Milman ; Cyclops, Shelley ; Medea, Augusta Webster ; "Three Dramas of Euripides" (Alcestitis, Medea, Hippolytos), by William Cranston Lawton (Houghton, Mifflin & Co., Boston, 1889).

For Aristophanes — C. A. Wheelwright (1857) ; J. H. Frere (five plays only : Acharnians, Knights, Frogs, Birds, Peace, 1874).

For Theocritus, Bion, Moschus — Thomas Creech (1680, quaint, old-fashioned English) ; M. J. Chapman (1836) ; C. S. Calverley (1869).

For the Anthology — "Collections from the Greek Anthology," by the Rev. Robert Bland and others, London, 1813 ; "From the Garden of Hellas," translations into verse by Lilla Cabot Perry (United States Book Company, New York, 1891) ; "Selections from the Greek Anthology," edited by Graham R. Tomson.

All the above-mentioned are in verse. Literal prose translations of the most important of the Greek Poets may be found in Bohn's Classical Library. Other prose versions are : Iliad — Lang, Leaf, and Myers ; Odyssey — Butcher and Lang, Professor G. H. Palmer ; Pindar — F. A. Paley, E. Myers ; Æschylus — F. A. Paley ; Sophocles — R. C. Jebb ; Theocritus, Bion, Moschus — Andrew Lang ; an admirable version with valuable introduction on "Theocritus and his Age." See, further, Leigh Hunt's charming volume, "A Jar of Honey from Mt. Hybla."

For further information concerning the Greek Poets, besides the various histories of Greek Literature, Mahaffy's and others, there may be recommended the several volumes in the series of "Ancient Classics for English Readers," edited by the Rev. W. Lucas Collins ; also, John Addington Symonds' "Studies of the Greek Poets ;" Sir Edwin Arnold's "The Greek Poets ;" "The Ancient Classical Drama," by Richard G. Moulton. In connection with the dramatic writers may be read the "Samson Agonistes" of Milton, the "Prometheus Unbound" of Shelley, and the "Atalanta in Calydon" of Swinburne — all of them inspirations from the Greek.

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NOTE. The translations in the Introduction are mainly from Plumptre, Bulwer-Lytton, and Frere.

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